



METRO BOOST IS 'GAME CHANGER'

Report by Peter Madeley

A £250 million boost for local transport, extending the Midland Metro route to Dudley and Merry Hill, has been hailed as a 'game changer' by the borough's council leader.

It followed the Prime Minister's announcement of plans for better transport links across the West Midlands in a bid to create thousands of jobs.

Dudley Council leader Councillor Patrick Harley hailed the decision as 'a real game changer' for the borough, saying it would create thousands of jobs locally.



PM met apprentices

Mrs May also said she was 'optimistic' that the region would be handed more powers under a second devolution deal.

The PM visited the EEF Technology Hub to meet apprentices with Chancellor Philip Hammond, Business Secretary Greg Clark and West Midlands Mayor Andy Street.

Unlock

Mr Street said via Twitter: "The extension of the Midland Metro from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill has been a long time coming. This announcement means Dudley and Brierley Hill will be connected to the rail network for the first time since the 1960s."

Dudley Council chief executive Sarah Norman took to social media to say: "This will be a massive boost to Dudley town and Brierley Hill with the Dudley section open in 2022, Brierley Hill in 2023. It will unlock over 30,000 new homes and 865,900sqm of commercial floor-space, accommodating nearly 35,000 jobs."

The £250m transport boost is seen as the first move in a second devolution deal for the region, which the West Midlands Combined Authority has been pushing for.

Mrs May said: "We are already seeing, in the combined authority, in the Mayor, the difference that having that devolution can bring."

BUS IS NAMED AFTER TOWN'S LAST CONDUCTOR



Former bus conductor Michael 'Gerry' Byrne with his family and the National Express bus that has been named after him

IT'S an honour given to few but then Michael 'Gerry' Byrne already has a special place in bus history.

The great-grandfather, who has just celebrated his 100th birthday, was the last bus conductor in Stourbridge, and his former bosses decided to mark his milestone birthday by naming a bus after him.

Mr Byrne and his family were invited to the National Express bus depot in West Bromwich for the unveiling.

The bus company also made a plaque commemorating the occasion which was presented to him at his birthday party at the

Stourbridge Institute last month, when the surprise was revealed.

The former Midland Red employee worked on the buses for more than 30 years, from 1948 until 1979, putting in plenty of overtime to provide for his eight children.

Neighbourhoods

He covered routes as far afield as Bridgnorth, Worcester and Birmingham but preferred the local runs to neighbourhoods like Pedmore Fields, Wollaston Farm and the Norton Estate.

Gerry said: "It was hard work for conductors being on your feet all day but you could sit and have a chat with passengers if it wasn't busy."

Bryan Bannister, the company's group communications manager, said: "We were delighted to do this for him."

Originally from County Limerick in Ireland, Gerry turned 100 last month.

He moved to Stourbridge in 1943 and worked as a bus conductor for Midland Red from 1948 until 1979, later working at Mecca Bingo on the Hagley Road until he retired aged 76.

EVENT

TV star to switch on Christmas lights

CHRISTMAS will be under way in Stourbridge when the town's festive lights are switched on by Coronation Street star Antony Cotton, on Saturday at around 5pm near the town clock.

Antony, who plays Sean Tully, will host a meet and greet session in Chicago's, before joining Santa and elves on stilts at the Ryemarket, where festive celebrations take place from 11am to 4pm.

Funfair rides in Market Street are from 11am with live entertainment in Crown Square and Fountain Square.



Antony Cotton

SKILLS

Work set to begin on £30m university

PLANS for a £30 million university for engineers in Dudley will soon get under way with surveying work to begin by April.

Dudley College wants to offer degree level training in engineering, manufacturing and transport technology, providing skills needed by local firms.

The college has revealed it wants to start site investigation work on the proposed location of the university at the town's former railway station.

A funding bid for £64,400 is expected to be approved by members of the Black Country LEP, paving the way for work to start this financial year. The centre will provide research and development laboratories to explore the future of transport, and aims to be open by 2021.

Black Country Consortium chief executive Sarah Middleton said: "This will provide specialist training facilities that respond directly to local industry."

INSIDE

WHOLE LOTTA LOVE FOR ROB



PAGE 13

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PETER RHODES	6
LETTERS	7
FEED A FAMILY	17
CLUBS	23
THE TICKET	25
BRAIN GYM	31
MOTORING	33-34
SPORT	39-40
CONTACT US	

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Thousands flock to lights fantastic



Pop stars turn on the lights at Merry Hill

CHRISTMAS is officially here for revellers as thousands gathered to watch dazzling festive light switch-ons.

Merry Hill Shopping Centre, Halesowen and Blackheath got lit up as hundreds braved the cold to enjoy live entertainment and festivities.

Pop band The Vamps brought the house down when they gave a special concert for adoring Black Country fans at Merry Hill in Dudley on Saturday night.

The band performed an exclusive show for 600 lucky fans at the shopping centre before flicking the switch on the Christmas lights. This followed performances by X Factor singer Fleur East, Union J and Danny Dearden.

Vamps frontman Brad Simpson, from Birmingham,

said: "It is always great to perform back in the Midlands, we are happy to be here and are looking forward to bringing Christmas in with the crowd.

"It was great to meet our fans before the show too, it really makes you appreciate how much your music can help others or just how much they enjoy it."

Rob Pickersall, marketing manager for intu Merry Hill, said: "It was great to welcome The Vamps, they can be a real inspiration to the young people here."

Christmas arrived in Halesowen as hundreds flocked to Somers Square in Halesowen to see the decorations sparked into life by Romsley army veteran David Watson, who won gold at the Invictus Games. Another special guest was X Factor and Celebrity Big Brother star Stevi Ritchie

Man fell to his death through rotten stairs

A PENSIONER died after falling through a rotten staircase at his Black Country home and suffocating when landing face down, an inquest heard.

Police officers discovered 67-year-old Mervyn Parkes' body in his Cradley home after his cousin reported him missing.

They entered the property on Hillcrest Avenue on October 31 where he was found face down, Black Country Coroner's Court was told.

Assistant coroner Laura Nash said his cause of death was down to 'positional and traumatic asphyxia', while hypothermia was also a contributing factor.

His cousin, who was his only close living relative, called police after she had not heard from him in a while.

Mr Parkes, born in Stourbridge, lived on his own and was retired.

Police found he had fallen through a rotten staircase and believed his body had been there for some time, said Ms Nash.

Ladders

She commented how officers had described his house as being in an unkempt condition.

Mr Parkes had been using a set of step ladders as a result of the rotten staircase, the inquest heard.

Ms Nash said: "On the balance of probability I put his cause of death as accidental. His cause of death is down to positional and traumatic asphyxia and hypothermia.

"Police attended his address after his cousin raised concern that she had not heard from him for a while.

"Police could see on arrival circumstances that he had fallen through a rotten staircase.

His landing position meant he suffocated and could not breathe.

Hypothermia, a medical emergency when the body loses heat quicker than it can create it, also contributed to his death, the court was told.

Doreen returns to meet market pals



Doreen signs copies of her DVD at Brierty Hill market with butcher Bruce Hodgkiss from Halesowen

SHE is known as 'a Lazy Cow' but kind-hearted Doreen Tipton was keen to bring love and laughter to traders and shoppers at Brierley Hill Market.

Doreen, who started out life as an internet video star thought up by Quarry Bank writer and filmmaker David Tristram, visited

the market on High Street as part of her 'grand tour' of the area as she shot scenes for Doreen's Black Country DVD earlier in the year.

On her return last Thursday, she spent hours greeting stallholders and shoppers. Caretaker Frank Chamberlain said: "It went really well and we had quite a crowd."

Doreen - Walsall actress Gill Jordan - is touring new show Doreen: Rise of the Yam-Yam before she takes up residence at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre for panto Jack and the Beanstalk. She won the best newcomer panto award for her role as The Lazy Empress in Aladdin, the Grand's previous panto.

Cannabis is found during crackdown on illicit cigs

A CANNABIS farm was discovered in Dudley during a crackdown on the sale of illegal tobacco.

A haul of more than 50,000 illegal or counterfeit cigarettes, as well as the surprise find of around 1,000 cannabis plants, were seized during raids by Dudley Council's trading standards team and West Midlands Police using trained tobacco detection dogs.

In the joint operation, the raids were carried out at properties in Dudley, Brierley Hill and Halesowen, along with a routine inspection in Stourbridge. At three properties they discovered tobacco, while at the Dudley premises three floors of cannabis plants were found.

Councillor Peter Miller, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, said: "Through joint operations with partners and our own investigations we are working hard to stop the sale of illegal cigarettes. While our day of action was targeted at finding illegal tobacco, at one of the properties a large number of cannabis plants were found, which the police are investigating.

"Selling illegal tobacco is a crime and offenders need to know that they will face consequences. While all smoking is harmful, illegal tobacco is sold at low prices and without necessary health warnings which makes it easier for young smokers to get hooked."

Police plea on violent robbery

POLICE are investigating a vicious crime last week when a 64-year-old man was tied up with wire and attacked during a robbery at a Lower Gornal pub.

Two masked men forced their way into the Black Bear pub in Deepdale during the early hours of Sunday, November 12.

They pushed their way into the pub after the owner went to investigate a noise. One of the men is believed to have threatened the man with a gun, while the other held a scalpel-like instrument.

The man was severely assaulted, tied with wires and put into a cabinet, before the men made off with a quantity of cash between 3am and 4am.

Police are continuing to investigate and anyone with information is asking to call police on 101.

Family are sought

THE Black County Coroner's Officer is hoping to get in touch with relatives of Anthony Ryan, aged 60, who was found dead in his home in Tansey Green Road, Brierley Hill, earlier this month.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Further delays as lights remain

TEMPORARY three-way traffic lights are to remain in Pensnett until the week before Christmas as 'critical' work on a £6.3 million road improvement scheme continues.

Birds Meadow and Bradley Street will remain closed at junctions with High Street.

The lights will remain in operation at the junction of High Street and High Oak, with drivers warned to expect delays.

Motorists will also not be able to turn right into Tansey Green Road from this week, with water works taking place. Traffic will be diverted via Dreadnought Road.

Pushchair was struck by lorry

A TODDLER was fortunate to escape with just a bump to her head after her pushchair was struck by a lorry in Dudley on Monday afternoon.

The accident happened on the A461 Duncan Edwards Way in Dudley.

An ambulance spokeswoman said: "When call assessors in our control room received 999 calls reporting a collision between a lorry and a pushchair, they feared the worst. Whilst ambulance staff found no other apparent injuries, they took the decision to convey the girl to Birmingham Children's Hospital with her mum."

Careers fair to be hosted by MP

AN MP has organised a careers fair in Stourbridge. Margot James will host the event at the Glasshouse College on Thursday, November 30.

It is part of the Stourbridge MP's Raising Aspirations programme.

The event will take place from 4.30pm to 6pm. Businesses confirmed to attend include Barclays, Jaguar Land Rover, Virgin Media, Dudley NHS Group, Dudley Council and West Midlands Ambulance Service.

To attend email margot.james.mp@parliament.uk or call (01384) 370574.

Time limit for online park consultations

TIME is running out for borough residents who use Stevens Park, Quarry Bank, who want to take part in consultation about the future of the park.

Following first phase agreement by the heritage lottery fund, Dudley Council is now looking at moving the project onto the next phase.

The online questionnaire can be found at www.dudley.gov.uk and should be completed by no later than Thursday, November 30.

Footballing fraudster has been shown the red card

THE final whistle has been blown on a footballing fraudster who netted more than £14,000 in disability benefits despite banging in goals on a Sunday morning.

Gary 'Gaz' Wilson was told he had avoided jail 'by the narrowest of margins' when he was before the court for sentencing.

He racked up cash in Disability Living Allowance and Employment Support Allowance while at the same time, during November 2012 and May last year, the 30-year-old 'prolific' striker from Bilston was turning out for Sunday league teams.

But the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) cried foul after filming him playing.

Father-of-four Wilson, who once had a pro contract at Newcastle United, admitted two counts of benefit fraud as he had failed to inform the DWP his condition had improved.

His claims were not deemed false in the beginning and Walsall Magistrates Court heard he still suffered from back and hip problems.

Magistrates handed him an 18-week prison sentence suspended for two years.

Wilson, of St Chads Road, was also ordered to pay £135 costs and adhere to a three-month curfew.

He has so far paid back around £4,700 of the £14,568.63 that he was not entitled to.

Man charged on poppy cash theft

A MAN has been charged after a charity collection box containing cash from the sale of remembrance poppies was snatched from a butcher's shop in South Staffs.

Kevin Waldron, aged 35, of Norfolk Road, Wollaston, has been charged with stealing a poppy charity box from the shop in Wombourne on November 9.

A red Royal British Legion donations box was stolen from Bromley Butchers on Common Lane in Wombourne.

Police had released CCTV images showing a man in the Co-op store next door to the butcher's shop just 15 minutes before the theft, hoping to trace him in relation to the incident.

£24k Albion medal

A GOLD medal awarded to former Albion captain Jesse Pennington sold for £24,000 at auction - three times the sum expected. Known as 'Peerless Pennington', he led Baggies to their first league title in 1920.

More than £9,500 raised by hospice ball



Guests and musicians at the ball

MORE than £9,500 has been raised for a Stourbridge Hospice at the charity's annual ball.

Hundreds of guests spent the evening at the Ramada Park Hall Hotel in Wolverhampton, celebrating their support of the hospice and helping to raise more than £9,500 for families in the Black Country and surrounding area.

Live entertainment was provided by Jamie Knight and his Manuka Trio, as well as games and interactive activities for guests throughout the evening and also an auction

which contributed heavily to the total amount raised on the night.

Diane Moore, event organiser for Mary Stevens Hospice, said: "We really are privileged to have such a passionate and committed supporter base, and it was fantastic to see everyone dressed up to the nines for their hospice."

"There was a special atmosphere throughout the night, and the money raised through this event will make the most enormous difference to the families relying on our care."

We can't wait to do it all again

next year, and we'd just like to thank everyone who came and all of our corporate partners who made the evening possible with donations and sponsorship!"

The Hagley Road Hospice must raise more than £2.3 million every year in order to care for families battling the impact of life-limiting illnesses, as the charity receives just 18 per cent of funding from local government.

The annual ball which has been sponsored by Birmingham printers Callprint for the past two years.

Officer used a taxi to pursue and catch crooks

A POLICE officer Tasered a burglary suspect, while another suspect was arrested at gunpoint during an incident in Stourbridge.

The officers had been called to reports of a burglary in Park Street when the drama unfolded at 10.15pm on Saturday.

West Midlands Police said an officer made her way through the front door of the property and into a corridor where she came face to face with a man who pointed what is believed to have been a gun at her.

She identified herself as a police officer but the suspect held the gun at chest height. Then, as the officer backed out of the house, the suspect escaped with a number of others.

But the officer was not giving up, on hearing from passers-by that the gang had escaped in a car she commandeered a taxi to follow them.

The led to her deploying the electro-shock weapon when one of the gang failed to comply with her instructions, while more officers arrived and arrested two other suspects. An hour later, armed police arrested another suspect at gunpoint on Stourbridge High Street.

Officers are currently searching for the firearm and have examined a vehicle that was recovered, while specialist teams are carrying out searches.

Praised

Chief inspector Jack Hadley praised the female officer and said: "The officer demonstrated outstanding courage and professionalism to single-handedly pursue these armed suspects in the correct manner. I am extremely impressed with her dogged commitment and tenacity."

A man aged 19 was arrested on suspicion of possessing a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence.

Another man, 21 was arrested on suspicion of burglary, while a third, aged 17 and from Stourbridge, was held on suspicion of burglary and carrying a bladed weapon. The fourth, a 17-year-old girl, was arrested on suspicion of burglary. All four were being questioned.

Witnesses are asked to call police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Shining a light on living museum



The blacksmith giving a demonstration at the evening of light and sound at Black Country Living Museum

THOUSANDS of visitors were treated to a unique evening with modern art installations blended in with The Black Country Living Museum's historic architecture.

Billed as 'An Evening of Light and Sound' the event saw the museum light up like never before in an effort to bring the 'wonder

and horror' of the Black Country to life through sound, video and light shows.

The event on Sunday was the culmination of work created by artist Andy Mckeown of Wild Strawberry Interactive Media and included videos taken by visitors to the site over the last month.

The evening got underway with a procession of lanterns created by community groups.

Head of visitor engagement, Tessa Lovell, said: "The installations are something really different for the museum and reflect the wonder and horror of the Black Country's past."

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COUNTY NEWS

£284k raised at seized car auction

TWENTY three BMWs and 17 Audis were among 180 seized vehicles which have been sold at auction by West Midlands Police.

The haul has raised £284,480 for the force and included one vehicle sold for £19,700.

Not all cars seized by the police were sold at auction, with 4,740 so far sent for crushing this year.

In total 8,091 have been seized from the roads in 2017, most for being uninsured.

The vehicles seized are part of a crackdown by police on uninsured and unlicensed drivers over the past 12 months.

Moorhouse and Delaney on bill

COMEDIANS Justin Moorhouse and Gary Delaney will be performing in the next Live at the Civic comedy night at Brierley Hill Civic Hall in the new year.

The show is on February 17 with tickets £10 if booked by the end of this month from bhilcivic.co.uk

Moorhouse has appeared on the likes of Live At The Apollo and 8 Out Of 10 Cats, is a regular panellist on Five Live's Fighting Talk and has starred in Coronation Street. Gary Delaney, married to fellow comic Sarah Millican, is a Mock The Week regular.

The host will be Dudley rising star Wayne Beese.

The self-employed are less stressed

PEOPLE working for themselves are less stressed, have a better work-life balance and better mental wellbeing.

AXA Business Insurance's stress index survey found being on call 24/7 and fluctuating monthly incomes were the major twin bugbears for the self-employed. It found 78 per cent were stressed to some extent compared to nine out of 10 in employment. They are also three times less likely to say they deal with 'difficult' people as part of daily work.

Rock legends Iron Maiden back in Brum

LEGENDARY rockers Iron Maiden return to Birmingham next year.

Formed in 1975, the band have released 38 albums – including live recordings, EPs and compilations.

Their 16th studio album, The Book of Souls, was released in 2015.

Iron Maiden will play Birmingham's Genting Arena on August 7. Tickets will go on sale from 9am on November 24.

Hashtag thanks to ambulance service

A HEART-WARMING hashtag has showcased respect for ambulance services after backlash to a rude note that was left on an emergency vehicle.

#BlueLightHappy has been used in tweets from people around the Black Country to thank paramedics for their work. A paramedic from the West Midlands Ambulance Service and the brains behind the hashtag, Robert Moore, explained that he wanted

to increase the morale of emergency services. He said: "I feel like there has been an increased number of reports of negative behaviour towards my colleagues."

"First there was the note, then another report of a colleague getting headbutted and a windscreen of a police car was crashed during a remembrance service. It felt like a bleak time for us. In the last month I have been

spat at and punched in the chest and these are things that shouldn't happen."

It follows an incident last week when Hassan Shabbir, aged 27, left a note on the windscreen of an ambulance telling them not to block his drive while paramedics were attending a man who was throwing up blood. He later apologised.

@999Tina wrote: 'I had a lovely

Dudley crew come out to me when necessary for me to take a trip up to Russells Hall! Recovering from surgery for Cauda Equina now! #team999 #BlueLightHappy' @J_x_Jazzle wrote: 'Amazing professionals who helped my sister when I found her semi-conscious at home #BlueLightHappy. She made a full recovery from septicemia, encephalitis and meningitis. Thank you for everything'

Life sentence for father who murdered children

By Annabal Bagdi

A KILLER father who smothered his young children with a petrol-soaked rag and then tried to kill his wife in a gas explosion at their home has been jailed for life.

Endris Mohammed must serve a minimum 33 years for the murder of son Saros, eight, and daughter Leonor, six, as the judge told him: "You deliberately snuffed out their young lives."



Endris Mohammed – set his car alight

The 47-year-old also tried to murder his partner, Penil Teklehaimanot, by setting fire to the family home in Hamstead, Great Barr, and puncturing the gas pipes. But the fire didn't take hold and Ms Teklehaimanot was woken by a smoke alarm.

Mohammed – who originally came to the UK from Ethiopia – had denied the murders, claiming diminished responsibility allegedly caused by a depressive disorder.

But Mr Justice Andrew Gilbert said: "You designed to kill all three."

Passing sentence at Birmingham Crown Court, Mr Justice Gilbert told Mohammed: "This country has a long proud history of welcoming those from abroad who flee from persecution. Both of you had done so, and established your lives here in Birmingham, along with your two children."

"However that secure and apparently happy family life was destroyed by you."

The Judge said the children had trusted their father and were enjoying a half-term 'sleepover' downstairs at the house. "You repaid their trust in you by killing them," he added.

Mohammed smothered the two children with a petrol-soaked rag before starting a blaze.

The kitchen cooker was dislodged, leaking gas into the home, the back door locked and the key



Saros, aged eight and Leonor, aged six, who were murdered by their father

tossed onto the front lawn, denying the family any chance of escape, prosecutor Mr Jonas Hankin QC had told the court.

The bodies of the children were pulled from the house as it went up in flames by their mother and a neighbour, before being placed on the garden.

The trial heard how little Leonor was briefly revived at the scene but died later in hospital.

Mohammed was driving on the M6 as neighbours and paramedics battled to save his children, with his taxi later set on fire 40 miles away in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire.

The killer was found on the ground next to the

vehicle with serious burns and spent three months in hospital.

He fled in his Uber cab after killing Saros and Leonor in Holland Road on October 28 last year.

The taxi driver, who has set his car alight on the night of the killings, had admitted smothering his children.

Mohammed claimed he had decided to end his life over money worries but police found they could live off his wife's earnings as a care worker.

Mohammed was found guilty of two counts of murder and one of attempted murder after a two-week trial and will be 80 before he gets out of jail.

Grass is cut and weeds go in council green boost

COUNCIL bosses are set to pump £500,000 into green care over the next two years, giving a boost to parks and open spaces.

Dudley Council has invested £150,000 this financial year and is proposing to spend a further £350,000 next year.

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services, said the move is to reverse cuts which were made under the last administration, run by Labour.

She said: "We are investing £150,000 this financial year which will allow us to reinstate grass cutting at 125 sites and focus on weed removal on our highways. We are proposing a package of measures totalling £350,000 next financial year to improve maintenance of our parks and open spaces."

"We have listened to our residents and this proposed programme will improve overall standards of green care maintenance, restoring community pride and making the borough a more attractive, appealing place to live."

In September, it was revealed that the local authority had slashed its budget on grass-cutting services by £50,000 to make savings. But this move is reversing that measure.

A Dudley Council report highlighted how, for an urban authority, the Dudley borough is 'enriched with green space'.

Around 38 square miles of green space exists in the borough. Around 30 per cent of this is made up of parks, nature reserves and open space looked after by the council's Green Care team. Among areas improved is grassland in a cul-de-sac on the Northway in Sedgley.

Woman sees off bogus salesmen

AN elderly woman whacked a pair of bogus callers with her stick when she suspected they were trying to trick their way into her home.

Two people approached the property on Fullbrook Road, in The Delves, trying to sell gold, but having been targeted before the woman questioned the culprits.

She rebuffed them with her stick when one of the suspects put his foot in the doorway.

West Midlands Police said it was now investigating after the woman reported the incident to them. It happened at around 2.30pm on November 10. Neighbourhood officers have been on the lookout for suspicious callers.

Anyone with information which could help the inquiry should call police on 101.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Greek restaurant plan for old pub

WORK is now under way to turn an historic Sedgley pub into a new restaurant.

The Courthouse in Sedgley, which was built in the 19th century, is undergoing transformation work by its owners, with scaffolding now pictured around the outside.

Sedgley ward councillor Michael Evans said the establishment 'will either be a Greek restaurant or takeaway, or restaurant and takeaway, but it will be definitely Greek'.

It will add to the list of eateries in the town centre, including various curry restaurants and the Delightful Desserts shop that recently opened.

The pub, which originally served as a courthouse, was due to go up for auction earlier this year but was bought beforehand.

Catch a comedy Christmas panto

THE Comedy Theatre Group present new family pantomime for Christmas – Robin Hood and his Merry Maids.

It will be at Gig Mill Church Hall, Stourbridge, on December 15 at 7pm and December 16 at 2pm and 7pm. Tickets from Fair and Square, Market Street, Stourbridge or call (01384) 824766.

Magical play is for all the family

STOURBRIDGE Theatre Company are staging their production of Tom's Midnight Garden from tonight (Thursday) to Saturday at Stourbridge Town Hall, with evening performances at 7.30pm and Saturday matinee at 2.30pm. See stourbridgetheatre.co.uk or call 0333 666 3366.

Hundreds on march to honour war dead

UP TO 2,000 people turned out for a remembrance march in Gornal this year, say organisers.

The parade on Sunday, November 12, began at the Zoar Church in Bank Street and went to the war memorial in Temple Street.

The list of names of local service people who lost their lives was read out by Royal British Legion members.

Festive church fair

A CHRISTMAS fair takes place at a church in Upper Gornal on Saturday.

The event is at St Peter's Church in Kent Street from 10.30am to 2.30pm.

Stalls will include books, a tombola and refreshments. Money raised will go toward church funds.

Only five weeks left to save the green belt

CAMPAIGNERS have warned there is 'only five weeks' to save Halesowen's countryside from being built on with new homes and industries.

A total of 22,000 properties and 300 hectares marked for industrial use are needed to meet the region's growing population by 2036, according to a strategy document.

Halesowen Abbey Trust believes Halesowen's rural areas will be the main target for developments unless Dudley Council steps in before a 'green built review' in January.

Mick Freer, head of the trust, said: "This is the most serious threat that I have experienced in my 40 years of volunteering for conservation."

The shortage of homes and industries have been identified as part of the Black Country Core Strategy, a planning document drawn up by Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton councils.

Mr Freer believes 6,000 homes and 75 hectares of industry will be found in the Dudley borough – around a quarter of the overall total – with many in and around Halesowen.

Regeneration

Paul Mountford, head of planning and regeneration, said a 'green built review' is likely to start in January, where planners will identify potential sites. But Dudley Council has confirmed no land has been identified so far.

Mr Freer said: "If the councillors want to protect our countryside, they must instruct the planners to stop the contractors from searching for sites in our countryside. They have a maximum of five weeks to do so."

He claimed that areas at risk include Lapal, Coombeswood, Grange Hill, Hayley Green, Lutley, Oldnall and Foxcote.

Dudley Council leader Patrick Harley said: "It is far too early to talk about specific locations. No firm decisions have been made."

Commuters can help stop suicides

A CAMPAIGN has been launched urging people to intervene to help prevent railway suicides.

Commuters in the West Midlands have been asked to take part in the new suicide prevention campaign on the railways. This would involve them spotting vulnerable people and talking to them to interrupt their suicidal thoughts.

Samaritans, British Transport Police, Network Rail and the train operating companies have launched Small Talk Saves Lives to give travellers the confidence to act. See samaritans.org for more information.

Aircraft overshoots runway and crashes



The crash scene at Halfpenny Green Picture: West Midlands Ambulance Service

TWO elderly men escaped serious injury when the light aircraft they were flying in overshoot a runway, ploughed through two hedges and crossed over a road before coming to a halt in a field.

A wing was ripped off the plane in the incident, which happened at Halfpenny Green Airport, near Bobbington, at about 11.40am last Thursday.

The Piper Warrior plane is thought to have been landing when the dramatic accident happened.

Airport firefighters were on the

scene almost immediately. An ambulance, a paramedic officer and the Midlands Air Ambulance from Cosford with a trauma doctor and critical care paramedic were all rushed to the scene.

A West Midlands Ambulance Service spokesman said: "The aircraft overshoot runway 16, went through a hedge, over Water Lane and through another hedge coming to rest in a field."

"The left side wing was ripped off in the accident," said the spokesman. "Thankfully, neither of the occupants

were seriously hurt and both were able to get out of the aircraft."

"One man had suffered cuts and bruises plus a laceration to his head. After assessment by the doctor, he was taken to New Cross Hospital, Wolverhampton, by land ambulance as a precaution."

"The other man had a minor facial injury and chose not to go to hospital."

"Considering what had happened to the aircraft, both men got away remarkably unscathed."

Nearby Water Lane was closed while the incident was dealt with.

Knife-wielding robber is jailed for 11 years

A ROBBER who threatened a taxi driver with a knife in Dudley before attacking police officers who tracked him down has been jailed for 11 years

Khaleel Hart demanded £80 from the driver after being dropped off in Maple Road, Wrens Nest, a court heard.

The attack happened on February 1 this year on the estate in Dudley. Police were alerted to the robbery following an emergency call.

Within an hour police officers were able to trace the 22-year-old robber, at the Station



Khaleel Hart

Hotel, Castle Hill. When they arrived, police say Hart became aggressive.

A court was told that during a struggle he assaulted four officers before he was taken into custody.

Detective Constable Dave Laver, of West Midlands Police, said he welcomed the sentence.

He also praised the victim's bravery in calling police with a good description, enabling the arrest to happen soon after.

He said: "This was a horrifying experience for the taxi driver. He was simply going about his normal line of work. Officers were able to quickly establish where Hart may be and were able to arrest him within an hour."

Substantial

"We remain committed to tackling crime involving weapons. This substantial sentence should serve as a strong warning about the risks of carrying a weapon."

"He showed a complete disregard for officers with his violent behaviour against those who seek to protect the public and uphold the law."

Hart, of no fixed address, was convicted of robbery after a hearing at Wolverhampton Crown Court. He had also been sentenced to four months for the assaults at a previous court hearing.

Boss swaps car seat for saddle



Andrew Hockedy who took part in the 969-mile cycle ride charity challenge despite three ops

A FUNDRAISER used peddle power to raise cash for charity after taking part in a gruelling bike ride from Land's End to John O'Groats.

Car dealership boss Andrew Hockedy swapped the driver's seat for the saddle as he completed the 969-mile cycle ride. But

it proved a tough challenge as he took part despite having three operations – two knee replacements and a double hip replacement – in the last 18 months.

Mr Hockedy, who is the managing director of the Stourbridge and Wolverhampton Volkswagen dealerships, was raising cash for

Marie Curie Cancer Care. The 55-year-old finished the ride in nine days raising £5,200.

Father-of-two Mr Hockedy said: "I did the ride for the first time when I was 50 and I've had a number of operations since then. But the toughest part was having to rough it in a tent."

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



Art price is manic Mundi for collector

WE'VE all been there at some time or other. You put a few quid away each month, build yourself a nice little nest egg, and then the mid-life crisis beckons.

It's just the way life goes. One minute you don't have two pennies to rub together, then suddenly you think to yourself "I've got a spare £360 million knocking about in the bank earning a paltry interest rate. I think I will spend it on a picture for the dining room instead."

Well that's what seems to have happened for one person at least. Last week, a tatty and not-particularly attractive painting that might be by Leonardo Da Vinci, fetched a staggering 450 million



Salvator Mundi, or saviour of the world

dollars at Christies in New York. That's £360 million in real money.

Now, I'm the first to admit I know nothing about fine art. When it comes to the masters, I'm a card-carrying philistine. I mean, The Mona Lisa? Yes,

it's better than I can do, but most things are. What differentiates that from, say, the work of a good art college lecturer?

Some years ago, I saw the celebrated paintings of Dudley by J W M Turner, which used to hang in the town's art gallery before it closed. I suppose I ought to say what an uplifting and enriching experience it was, but to be honest I thought they were a bit of a mess.

I certainly prefer the work of Black Country artist, and all-round nice guy, Graham Colbourne. But while Turner's works are priceless treasures, Graham donates his to local charities. Yet even among those in the know, the £360m painting has received a distinctly lukewarm reaction.

Jason Farago, of the New York Times called it "a proficient but not especially distinguished religious picture from turn-of-the-16th-century Lombardy, put through a wringer of restorations."

What does interest me, though, is that in 1958 the same picture sold for £45, or just under a grand when you allow for inflation. Back then, it was not thought to be by Da Vinci, so the inflated price is solely about who painted it, rather than any merit it might possess.

Which is just as well, because if I wanted that on my wall, I would not be crossing the Atlantic with my chequebook. I would cut the print out of the catalogue, and head down to Wilko for a frame.

Sometimes best to leave smartphone in your pocket



Adrian Edmondson – and which Shakespearean role will be next for him?



Sathnam Sanghera – success from what was once there for many working-class kids



Theresa May – where politics is involved, there's no legal lock that can't be picked

Paramedic: No need to shame notewriter

PARAMEDICS on an emergency call in Birmingham found this message on their ambulance: "You may be saving lives but don't park your van in a stupid place and block my drive." A paramedic posted the note on social media. But why? We pay paramedics to save lives, not to turn their job into photo-opportunities, nor to score points off members of the public who offend them. The paramedics could not have known the mental state of the person writing the note, nor the effects on him – or on neighbourhood relationships – of blabbing it online. It may be hard to believe in this Twitter-obsessed age but there are times when the best thing you can do with your smartphone is leave it in your pocket.

EARLY-morning mumbling. I heard a radio reporter describing an increase in the number of councils enforcing debts by the use of bayonets. Bailiffs, apparently.

IT'S excellent to see Adrian Edmondson getting rave reviews as the pompous old steward Malvolio in Twelfth Night at Stratford. I had lunch with him once in a wine bar in Wolverhampton and I can't recall an interview attracting so much interest, and obvious affection, from customers. It was inevitable that The Young Ones generation would eventually make it to the classical stage; Lenny Henry once told me his dream was to play Malvolio. And then he went off and did a memorable Othello instead. And what Shakespearean role will next beckon Mr Edmondson, still best remembered for those frenetic frying-pan fights with Rik Mayall? Bottom, perhaps?

IF Moscow really is planting fake news to bring down the West, expect it to be a well-con-

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cealed operation. You know how it is. You open one Russian troll and there's another troll inside.

THANKS for your memories of words spoken by teachers many years ago which have stuck in your memory. A reader who taught geography for 40 years describes asking one of his former pupils what, if anything, he remembered about his lessons. "I was hoping for some profound geographical memory," he says. Instead, the pupil recalled: "I spilt some ink on the classroom carpet and you called me a berk".

AND before some of you of a certain age reach for the keyboard for a good harrumph, I am ahead of you. Carpet in the classroom? Luxury.

I WROTE recently about the Co-op Bank no longer supplying addressed envelopes for customers to send their credit-card payments. A reader asks: "When did banks do anything to help their customers?" The common view of business, he says, is that their idea of "helping" customers is to make it increasingly difficult to contact them by letter or phone. If you're not on email, you're stuffed.

UNDER the headline "CoE to allow boys to wear dresses," the latest Private Eye magazine pokes fun at the Church of England which has suggested children should be able to "try out the many cloaks of identity," with little boys being allowed to wear tutus and girls to wear

tool belts if they wish. The Eye makes the point that CoE clergy are regularly seen in elaborate "non-gender" vestments. This surely rings a bell with older Eye readers who recall a classic 1986 front cover during the furious debate on female ordination. It showed three smiling bishops in their magnificent flowing robes with the caption: "Who needs women priests when they've got us?"

I WATCHED The Boy with the Topknot (BBC2), Sathnam Sanghera's tale of growing up in Wolverhampton in a family stalked by mental illness. Later, I picked up the copy of his book he presented to me nine years ago. In the acknowledgments he noted: "I would like to thank Peter Rhodes . . . for giving me my first break in journalism." I'm proud of helping this gifted young writer to get started in his career although, to be honest, I can't recall doing much more than offering a few tips. The real leap forward in Sathnam Sanghera's life came from something once available to millions of bright working-class kids. A grammar-school education.

FASCINATING to see Theresa May "locking in" the timing of Britain leaving the EU by writing the departure date into law. I seem to recall that the timing of general elections was locked into law, setting them at five-yearly intervals, until Mrs May thought a snap election would be a good idea. When politics is involved, there ain't a legal lock that can't be picked.

HOWARDS End. That's the correct title. No apostrophe. I can't explain it either. Nor can I explain why a TV series has been made when a perfectly fine movie of Howards End already exists.

TALKING POINT



Kindness can create a lasting memory

Why do we always hear 'there's a lot of bad 'uns out there'? Yes I am sure that is the case but there are also a lot of good 'uns as well, so let's hear more about them instead.

It is a shame that sometimes it does take something bad to happen to really show the true character of people.

Often the people you think will be there by your side disappear into thin air, but maybe somebody you feel you hardly know, or don't know at all, goes above and beyond.

And with all the awful atrocities this year, somewhere, among all the tragedy and sadness, there are tales of heroism, kindness, on both a small and major scale. And sometimes it is the people you think least likely to step up – people dropping kids at school, on their way to work, popped out to get a paper, or just on a night out with mates – who step in to help. And even if, at the time, the help seemed minimal, it is how it makes the victim feel – supported, not alone.

There was an incident recently which summed up how a little thought can go such a long way. My daughter-in-law was on the motorway when the exhaust dropped off her car. With two children in the back of the car she quickly pulled onto the hard shoulder and rang for help.

The highway patrol turned up to advise and luckily she had breakdown cover.

So it was a case of waiting, probably for the best part of an hour, on the hard shoulder. As advised they got out of the car and stood outside.

It was cold, windy and wet and trying to keep two children warm and a two-year-old from straying into danger is no mean feat as the cars race by. She called us from the roadside, scared and cold.

Cars sped past but one kind man pulled over and offered her drinks and crisps for the kids and a coat to keep them warm.

It probably cost him next to nothing but the difference that made to the situation was immense. When she safely arrived at her mum's after having her car towed there, she called us to say all was fine.

And the thing she most remembered was not the fear and cold but the fact that somebody had stopped to help. A little kindness, a lasting memory. Her mum put something on Facebook, and I hope he saw it, or somebody who knows him told him, as he deserves praise for what he did. OK you might say a small gesture – crisps and drinks don't cost a lot – but for those few minutes the situation changed from despair to a warm glow at somebody's kindness. So you see, there are a lot of good people out there.

SUE ATTWATER



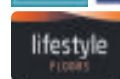
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Don't set up NHS boss as the fall guy

AFTER being on the edge of crisis during the summer, we have to hope that the National Health Service will be able to cope in the coming winter.

We have to hope that the NHS will be protected from major outbreaks of flu and the winter vomiting virus.

We have to hope that the NHS will not suffer too much from staff shortages as many foreign staff decide to

leave Britain or not apply as a result of the uncertainty about Brexit.

We have to hope that the NHS will be able to cope with the problems caused by bed blocking as a result of social care being underfunded.

Spare a thought for Simon Stevens, the NHS Chief Executive, who has been told that he is to be held personally responsible for NHS performance but who does not have any power to decide the amount of money it receives.

In June 2016 the country voted to leave the EU. Many people were motivated by the claim that we would be able to give an extra £350 million a week to the NHS.

We have to insist that the Government gives Simon Stevens and the NHS the money it deserves instead of setting him up as a fall guy,

R TABERNER
Tivdale

Address injustice at inquests

WHEN hospitals, the police, local authorities or other offices of the State are involved in an inquest, they often have legal representation funded by the public purse.

Yet the family suffering a bereavement, sometimes in the most terrible circumstances, is likely to be refused the same publicly-funded legal aid.

Without professional support at a coroner's hearing, distressed relatives are likely to be seriously disadvantaged. They are completely unfamiliar with the process and could miss the opportunity to ask the right questions.

The Home Secretary's adviser on the Hillsborough disaster, the Right Reverend James Jones, has now said there is a "pressing need" for families to be represented.

This cannot be yet another missed opportunity to address this injustice.

BRETT DIXON
Association of
Personal Injury
Lawyers

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
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Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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Art should be on show

READERS have no doubt seen the reports about the Brooke Robinson collection which now has no home due to the closure of Dudley Art Gallery and may wonder who he was. Brooke Robinson was a wealthy solicitor who was MP for Dudley for 20 years. On his death in 1911 he willed the sum of £30,000 for his collection of paintings, furniture and artefacts to be displayed. As this was a vast sum of money at the time, his widow and the trustees decided the money would be used to build the Brooke Robinson Memorial Hall which we now call the Town Hall, a coroners' court and also an art museum.

To do this required an act of Parliament, the Brooke Robinson Museum Charity Scheme Confirmation Act 1919. Under a deed of covenant the trustees and Dudley Council would maintain the exhibits and display them for the people of Dudley. So for all Mr Robinson gave to Dudley borough he asked only for space for his collection to be displayed, which it was before being shut away until 1981 when it was found a home in the art gallery.

RON GWILLIAMS
Brierley Hill

Museums in muddle over plans

I just wish we could be told the truth about the Brooke Robinson Collection.

All we have received so far are cryptic and contradictory news items released by the council and the Brooke Robinson Trust.

The whole basis of the argument for moving Dudley Museum was to sell off the museum building in St James's Road to generate funds after severe Government cuts. Now there seem to be plans to reopen the building in St James's Road and display the Brooke Robinson Collection.

The trust seems to be very active in re-ordering its collection (hence the recent auction). If that is the case why has the council spent £300,000 in moving the museum in the first place when it could have stayed where it was? It's a great museum but no-one goes there now because it's hidden away at Archives.

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Church on a mission to mark 175 years worship

WHEN Holy Trinity Church in Amblecote was founded in 1842 Queen Victoria, then still aged in her 20s, had just made the first train journey by a reigning British monarch.

Church organisers are determined on keeping the church at the heart of the community as it marks 175 years.

A series of events have been held to celebrate the anniversary and these will continue to into next year, according to church warden Andrew Riches.

He said: "The main thing has been to get the church out into the community and help people. We want to try to help the most unfortunate members of the community - hopefully we will have more community lunches in order to do that."

"We wanted to celebrate the history of the church but also make sure it is still relevant moving forward."

Next year the church is planning an archive event including performances by the CBSO big band.

Grown

Mr Riches said the church is bucking the trend of others which have seen attendances dwindling and it continues to average around 80 to 85 people at its Sunday services. He added: "We have actually grown in recent years."

Holy Trinity held its first service in August 1842. Four years earlier Amblecote was deemed worthy of having its own church and this was ratified at a meeting which was held on February 20, 1839, at the Talbot Hotel in Stourbridge.

A letter from The Earl of Stamford and Warrington had previously offered two acres of land and £300 towards



Alan Williams with Una Parsons, Gladys Tolley, Susan Riches and Sue Boex



Holy Trinity Church in Amblecote dates from the start of the Victorian era

'the erection of a church in the hamlet of Amblecote' together with an annual endowment of £100. Throughout 1839 and 1841, a committee of 12 helped plan the church.

The bricks were supplied at cost by William King of Amblecote Hall from his Withymoor works, which gives the building its distinctive old gold colour.

On August 7, 1841 the first stone of

the building was laid by James Foster and prayers were said by Rector of Old Swinford, the Rev CH Crauford. The church opened on Sunday August 7, 1842. Amblecote became a separate parish in 1845. In October 1849 the organ was unveiled, three years later a clock was placed in the tower. In 1856 the East Window was installed in memory of Mr Foster.

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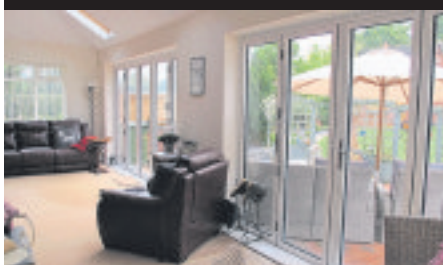


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VC war hero's grave is the last to be repaired

THE grave of a Zulu War hero will be one of the last to be restored by The Victoria Cross Trust due to lack of funding.

Colour Sergeant Anthony Booth's grave at St Michael's Church, in Brierley Hill, was initially thought to have been attacked by vandals in August this year.

More than £3,000 was raised in just a few days to help fund the restoration of it after an appeal was launched by the trust, which relies solely on donations.

It was later revealed that the grave may have been accidentally damaged during churchyard maintenance by Dudley Council.

The damage was discovered by Zulu War historian Jonathan Graham, who had visited the grave to take photographs, and he reported it to the VC Trust.



Sgt Anthony Booth

Now trust bosses state it will be their last restoration project for the time being due to 'lack of financial support'.

It comes as permission was granted by the Diocese of Worcester for work to be carried out.

Gary Stapleton, trust chief executive, said: "We

will be suspending any further work for the time being – the funds are just not there.

"We run the museum to raise the funds and despite operating in profit it is just not enough to start planning large restoration projects.

"It is annoying that rewards were put forward but then not put into the project, the crowdfunding page was a great effort but it seems the majority of that came about from the belief that it may have been criminal damage.

"This will be the last project for the time being until we have some Government funding or a kind benefactor."

Sergeant Booth was awarded the VC for saving 50 men by giving them covering fire during a retreat.



Vicar David Hoskin examines the damaged grave of Brierley Hill VC war hero Anthony Booth

Insurance industry professional in court over 13 false claims

AN insurance worker who used her industry knowledge to defraud companies out of more than £19,000 has avoided jail.

Rachel Shoer, aged 42, from Century Way, Halesowen, used fake names to set-up false insurance policies. She made 13 fraudulent claims over seven years, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

Investigators from the City of London Police discovered that Shoer followed a pattern of taking out a policy with a different insurer every year under a different name.

She admitted that because of her terrible claims history under her real name she was unable to take out home insurance and used false details to ensure she could receive insurance cover. Between 2009 and 2016, Shoer's fraudulent claims included multiple times where she used original pictures from her own wedding and 40th birthday to make claims on an engagement ring.

She had held a range of positions working in the insurance industry, and worked as an underwriter for an insurer during the time she was making the claims.

Shoer was given a 15-month sentence, suspended for two years, and a 20-hour community order after she pleaded guilty to making numerous false claims.

Police car rammed in 17-mile pursuit

A THUG rammed a police car during a 17-mile high-speed chase in a stolen van while swigging beer at the wheel, a court heard.

Leroy Scott, a father-of-two from Cradley, ignored police demands to stop, hitting speeds of up to 75mph as he sped through red lights, overtook queues of traffic and even smashed a patrol car out of the way as he raced through Dudley.

But Scott was finally came to a standstill in the wrecked van in Netherton and has been given a 14-month jail sentence after admitting dangerous driving.

The 25-minute chase started in Bridgnorth when police spotted Scott behind the wheel of the Peugeot Iveco on July 4, which was 17 days after the vehicles had been reported stolen, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

Passengers

The 40-year-old was swigging beer from a bottle as he drove, according to a police officer, said Miss Fiona Cortese, prosecuting.

Scott raced through the hamlets of Six Ashes and Enville, then the defendant, who had two passengers in the van, crossed a central reservation of the road and drove the wrong way down

By John Scott

the opposite carriageway.

Police tried to stop Scott in Duncan Edwards Way, Dudley, but he rammed one of the police cars. The van finally stopped in Cinder Bank.

Scott refused to take a breath test. He had 21 previous convictions involving 52 separate offences to do with vehicles.

Mr Daniel White, defending, conceded: "He has had difficulties with drink and drugs."

Scott from Severn Road, Colley Gate, admitted dangerous driving and failing to answer bail.

Judge Barry Berlin told him: "This was an utterly shocking piece of driving that put the police, other road users, your passengers and yourself at risk."

Scott will also face a five year driving ban on his release.

Volunteers needed

WE need more – that's the message from Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust as it marks the recruitment of its 200th volunteer.

The Volunteer Service has been building up a team of recruits to help around its sites, which include Sandwell, City and Rowley Regis Hospitals, as well as Leasowes Intermediate Care Centre.

The service aims to reach a target of 460 recruits by next September. Liza Gill, volunteers co-ordinator, said: "We have a varied range of roles for volunteers within the trust and we intend on increasing their presence across all sites over the coming months. There will also be an opportunity for volunteers at the Midland Metropolitan Hospital, when it opens in 2019.Call 0121 507 4855 for further details.

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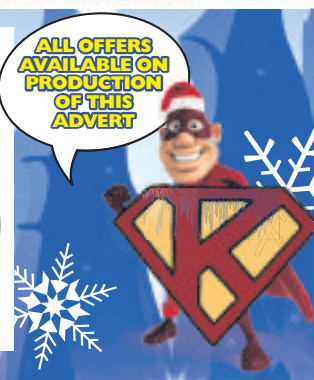
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Whole lotta love for Rob as rocker comes home

Robert Plant, Wolverhampton Civic Hall
GREAT to see two Midlands rock icons back together, Robert Plant and Wolves Civic. The legends are in action again, both the venue and the Black Country's home grown rock god.

There is always something special about a Plant gig in Wolverhampton, just a George Berry clearance kick away from his beloved Molineux and back with his people, where references to Tip-ton and the Arboretum are fully understood. They were queuing back to Queen Square to get into this sold out concert.

The former Led Zeppelin frontman even had his Auntie Gwen in the audience, on Monday who he thanked for taking him to the Gaumont to see such acts as Bo Diddley, the Everly Brothers and some young band called The Rolling Stones. "I didn't like them," he quipped. Take that Jagger.

There is a certain wistfulness about Plant's new album Carry Fire, reflected in his comment to the audience: "Three score and nine is a funny place to be."

Reunion

No longer the snake-hipped Adonis, more elder statesman, but he is always looking forward rather than surviving on past glories.

Long-time fans may bemoan the diminishing likelihood of another Led Zep reunion but they can enjoy plenty



Robert Plant sang songs from his solo albums and Led Zeppelin classics

of compensation in the stomping folk-rock of his band The Sensational Space Shifters, here boosted by the inclusion of top folk singer and fiddler Seth Lakeman, who became an honorary Space Shifter after his support set. The two guitarists, Skin Tyson and Justin Adams, were exceptional.

Opening with New World from the new album, followed by Turn It Up from 2014's Lullaby and the Ceaseless Roar, Plant then turned the clock back to 1970 for the ballad That's The Way from Led Zeppelin III. Other Led Zep classics were to follow, Gal-

lows Pole and Misty Mountain Hop in a set marked by some outstanding covers, including of Joan Baez's Babe I'm Gonna Leave You, Bukka White's Fixin' To Die and a radical revamp of traditional tune Little Maggie.

It had to end with an epic and so fans were treated to Whole Lotta Love, which he blended with folk song Santa Anna, as the final encore after a one hour and 45 minutes show. Just to hear the most famous riff in rock again sent a shiver down the spine and sent the audience home happy.

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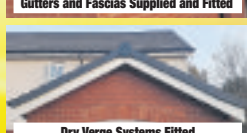
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Community help to fund funeral

A COMMUNITY has come together to raise money for the funeral of young Dudley father Chris Brookes, who died after falling from a bridge over Wolverhampton ring road.

More than 100 people attended an event held at Meadow Road Youth & Venture Site in Wren's Nest, Dudley. Chris, aged 22, who died on October 28, has left behind a three-year-old daughter, Layla-Jade, and girlfriend Sarah Jayne Collins, 23, who is expecting their son Chris Junior in January. A football tournament, tombola and bouncy castle for children were among the activities during the event on Saturday to raise money for Chris' funeral, which is on November 29. More than £4,300 has been raised so far.

Illegal immigrant cannabis 'gardener' has been jailed

POLICE uncovered a £150,000 cannabis factory while investigating a suspected burglary, a judge heard.

Officers got no answer from the front door of the address in Vicarage Road, Lye but found the back door was wide open, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

Mr Patrick Sullivan, prosecuting, explained: "There had been reports of a man being seen at the location with a knife but it appeared somebody had tried to burgle the place."

Illegal immigrant Klejvis Plangaj walked into

the house soon after police swooped to uncover the drug farm in which 180 plants were under cultivation.

The 28-year-old had been working as a 'gardener,' tending the crop and living full time at the property for four months, continued Mr Sullivan.

Debt

Experts estimated the plants could have produced drugs worth up to £150,000.

Plangaj said he was being paid £300-a-month to look after the cannabis, the court heard. He

maintained that he was paying off a debt but declined to disclose who he was working for.

The plants were being grown in the cellar and two upstairs rooms while the gardener lived in the front room which was kitted out with a bed and TV, added Mr Sullivan.

Miss Cathlyn Orchard, defending, said: "He had no right to be in this country and will be deported at the completion of his prison sentence. He came here to earn money."

Plangaj admitted producing cannabis and was jailed for 20 months.

Rogue traders face campaign

THREE popular markets and two car boot sales have joined a national campaign to ensure goods sold are legitimate and visitors are not ripped off.

In the run-up to Christmas, Staffordshire County Council's trading standards team is urging more to get on board.

The campaign aims to promote a fair and safe trading environment, including ensuring markets are free from counterfeit goods.

The campaign brings together councils, market operators, traders, industry groups and copyright and trademark owners.

Markets in Cannock, both indoor and outdoor, Penkridge and Lichfield are all signed up to the Real Deal campaign, as are car boot organisers at Ashover, near Kinver, and Stourbridge Rugby Club. For more information go to www.realdealmarkets.co.uk

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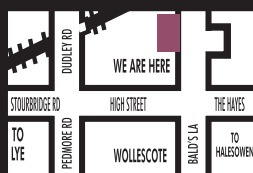
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Minister's flying visit for RAF



Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson in a Typhoon bomber emulator Pic: Sgt Paul Oldfield

THE new Defence Secretary visited a West Midlands air base to learn more about its work training future RAF engineers.

Gavin Williamson, MP for South Staffordshire, paid a flying visit to RAF Cosford last Thursday. He spent time meeting aeronautical engineering apprentices and experienced some of the cutting-edge training they undertake.

Group Captain Tone Baker, station commander at Cosford said: "It's been great to host the Secretary of State. He was very interested to see what we do here at RAF Cosford and he relished the opportunity to meet our young men and women, all of whom are excited about their future careers in the RAF."

In one of RAF Cosford's mechanical engineering training facilities the Secretary of State joined a team of apprentices who

were being instructed in how to change an aircraft engine – a skill that is vital for RAF engineers maintaining front-line aircraft all over the world. The Kinver MP quickly got involved in helping to lift the new engine into the aircraft before bolting it securely to the airframe.

After meeting Mr Williamson, senior aircraftman Phong-Amorn Chorsanthia said: "He was very down to earth and took an interest in what we do."

Engine secured, he went on to join weapons technician apprentices as they worked to assemble a Paveway IV laser-guided bomb. Aircraftwoman Rhiannon Wells said: "He was very interested in my training and I found him very easy to talk to."

Finally, he worked with a team of apprentices to diagnose an engine fault using RAF Cosford's Typhoon emulator.

Don't use antibiotics for minor ailments

A HEALTH campaign has been launched warning about over-using antibiotics.

Public Health England has launched the initiative called Keep Antibiotics Working. It warns that people should not use antibiotics unnecessarily, such as for colds and coughs, because they will stop working to treat some infections in future.

At least 5,000 deaths happen each year in England because antibiotics no longer work for some infections.

Councillor Elaine Costigan, cabinet member for public health and protection in Sandwell, said: "We all have a part to play in ensuring that antibiotics continue to work for future generations. It is important that both health professionals and the general public work together to tackle this issue. Taking antibiotics when you don't need them puts you and your family at risk of developing infections which cannot be easily treated."

Orchestra's first concert

AN inaugural concert by Kidderminster Festival Orchestra struck the right chord with an audience of more than 100 people.

Now orchestra founder and professional composer and conductor Annette Jackson is already planning a spring concert which will take place on April 7.

Annette said: "The acoustics in Kidderminster Town Hall, which is the home of this new orchestra, were wonderful." The orchestra has financial backing from TH Baker Jewellers.

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Firm is fined £390k after welder crushed by cylinder

A FIRM has been fined £390,000 and told to pay £24,000 costs after a welder was crushed by a 2.8 ton cylinder.

Andrew King was known to be doing a potentially dangerous job when disaster struck but The Angle Ring Company had not prepared a risk assessment for it, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The 36-year-old was using a propane lamp to weld plates onto the cylinder when it tipped forward and fell on him at the Broomfield Road, Tipton works on November 11 2014. It fractured his left leg in three places and lacerated the right leg. The injuries could have been worse if a post had not inadvertently halted the cylinder and prevented its full weight landing on him.

Mr King, who had worked at the firm for four years, said: "I shouted for help and felt blood inside by welder visor."

He was off work for nine months and is still suffering psychologically.

Warned

AMERICAN pianist Mike Garson, famed for his work on David Bowie's Aladdin Sane album, will be paying tribute to Bowie at Birmingham's O2 Institute on Saturday.

The New Yorker will be playing the Aladdin Sane album in full plus other Bowie favourites with special guests Steve Harley - one of Bowie's 70 contemporaries - and Gaby Moreno.

Meanwhile, after beating pancreatic cancer and overcoming a stroke last year, rock star Chris Rea has been determined to resume his musical career with a new album and tour.

The husky-voiced Teesider famous for The Road to Hell and Driving Home for Christmas is back with his 24th album, Road Songs for Lovers, and a concert at Birmingham Symphony Hall on Wednesday, November 29.

Sane pianist and on the road with Rea

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas



Santa's boozier - The Summerhouse pub's colourful display with landlords Phil and Karen Kennedy

CHRISTMAS has arrived at The Summerhouse, near Sedgley, which is famous across the Black Country for its extravagant festive decorations.

Hundreds of people flocked to the popular pub off Gospel End Road to see the fantastic array of lights.

Landlords Phil and Karen Kennedy are raising money for charity through the seasonal display with Heart Link Children's Charity in Leicester to benefit.

Karen explained that the East Midlands Children's Heart Care Association, based at Glenfield Hospital had helped her family.

Thousands of LED bulbs go into the display at the pub that Karen runs with husband Phil, 54. They have a son James, 15, and daughter Zoe, 11.

"They bring a bit of Christmas spirit to the community and everybody appreciates them which makes it worthwhile doing," she said. "The

Christmas lights are quite famous in the area and it seems to be getting bigger each year."

The theme of the display this year illustrates a child going to bed on Christmas Eve. It features Disney characters and a Christmas tree.

Karen, who has run the pub for three years, said it had a tradition of an extravagant display stretching back before the their arrival but she felt it had to continue.

Tree of Light ceremonies are planned

MARY Stevens Hospice is working with three venues to host its annual festive remembrance ceremonies.

The services are an opportunity for the local community to come together to remember those they have loved and lost.

A non-religious ceremony was being held at Hagley Golf Club yesterday evening (Wednesday) at 7pm, and later that evening the tree of remembrance in the hospice grounds was being lit, to remain until January 5.

St Mary's Church in Oldswinford hosts a ceremony on Saturday at 4pm, before a final ceremony takes place on Sunday at St John the Baptist Church in Halesowen.

Marie Faux, bereavement support officer, said: "Remembering those we have loved is a very important part of grieving."

"At our Tree of Light ceremonies, we offer a special environment in which we give thanks for those memories and come together to support other members of our community through a difficult time."

"There will be readings, music performed by some very talented local artists and choirs, and the chance to light a candle or sponsor a light in memory of your loved one."

For details see www.marystevenshospice.co.uk website.

Litter pick plan for Beacon beauty spot

PLANS are in the pipeline for litter picking to take place at a beauty spot.

The proposals are being drawn up by Friends of Sedgley Beacon in Dudley borough.

The group wants to protect the site and keep it well tended so visitors can enjoy leisure and community activities.

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Dave hits right chord to back appeal



Flamboyant Slade rocker Dave Hill is backing the Chronicle and Express & Star's Feed a Family campaign

IN the words of that famous song, 'It's Christmaaaaaas!', and now Slade guitarist is following on from those heady days of his band's domination of the festive season, by backing our Feed a Family This Christmas appeal.

Dave said he would be backing the Chronicle's sister paper, the Express & Star, with its festive appeal to support the county's vulnerable at Christmas.

The 71-year-old added: "Anything to do with a good cause like this, I'm happy to support. It's really good that the Express & Star is doing this."

We are collecting donations of non-perishable food which will be handed to food banks and other charitable organisations across the region.

THE DROP-OFF POINTS:

Express & Star Wolverhampton, 51-53 Queen Street, WV1 1ES; Express & Star Cannock/Walsall office, Queen Square, Cannock WS11 1EA; Oldbury office, Black Country House, Rounds Green Road, Oldbury, B69 2DG.

DONATIONS CAN ALSO BE DROPPED OFF AT:

Waitrose Wolverhampton, Penn Road, WV2 4NJ; The Midcounties Co-operative Food Store Codsall, 28-32 Wood Lane/Bakers Way, Codsall WV8 1DB. Donations dropped off at those will go to The Well.



Readers can donate festive food, as well as basics. Non-food items such as toiletries, baby supplies, new socks and small presents are also welcome.

Good causes set to benefit are The Well (Home of Wolverhampton Food Bank), Wolverhampton's the Good

Shepherd Ministry, the Black Country Food Bank, the Smethwick Food Bank, Walsall North Food Bank and Cannock and District Food Bank.

The appeal will also support The Haven, which helps women and children affected by domestic violence.

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LP-StourbridgeChronicle

Oh brother! Twigs were hot to trot

The Lemon Twigs/Flyte, O2 Institute 2, Birmingham LONDON band Flyte, who've already played Wolverhampton and Birmingham venues in their own right this year, only had a half hour support slot in which to impress, and impress they did with carefully crafted pop songs from their hugely promising debut album *The Loved Ones*.

They have a fine voiced frontman in Will Taylor, though all four play a part vocally with Fleet Foxes-like close harmonies showcased by their a capella version of Alvvays' *Archie*, Marry Me. Highlights included the singles *Victoria Falls* and *Cathy Come Home* plus '80s flavoured *Sliding Doors*.

The Lemon Twigs, a New York quartet based around brothers Brian and Michael D'Addario, former Broadway stage kids, are brash, bizarre and brilliant.

Their music is a theatrical take on '70s rock. The first half was fronted by long-haired Brian, a slick and confident singer/guitarist whilst brother Michael bashed the hell out of the drum kit like a latter day Keith Moon. Midway through the 70 minute set, siblings swap places and it becomes apparent that Michael is an unabashed showman akin to Iggy Pop, high kicking and turkey trotting around the stage, climbing and leaping off the speakers. Highlights included *These Words* and *Why Didn't You Say That?*

LEON BURAKOWSKI



Blondie's Debbie Harry on stage at the Birmingham Arena.

Pic: Aden Southall

Bee in her bonnet, but Blondie fans in Rapture

CONCERT REVIEWS

Blondie, Arena Birmingham

NEVER one to be low key she appeared on stage wearing a white cape with the F word on the back – relating to the planet – and two large furry bees in her hair – not real I hasten to add.

This was Debbie Harry's stand for the bee population, very appropriate as her latest album is called *Pollinator*. Well Blondie certainly did get the crowd buzzing from the off.

There was no point in settling into our seats as the packed Arena was on its feet as soon as she appeared on stage, and for nearly two hours she took us through her old and new hits.

Kicking off with *One Way Or Another* she soon invited the audience to sing along, a little bit too often for my liking as she just kept holding out the mic to the fans. Fine, but I had gone there to hear her sing not them.

At the age of 72, and dressed very simply in a white shirt and trousers and a sort of black tie/scarf there was still a glimpse of

those fabulous cheekbones. Ruffling up her hair frequently – very blonde of course – she soon dispensed with her dark glasses and paid attention to her favourite fan, the electric one on the floor in front of her which she fiddled with.

I am not sure if she was too warm or just liked the breeze in her hair for the wind-swept look.

Her voice was a bit shaky at first but got stronger as the night went on and the fans – of all ages, many not even a twinkle in the eye when she was at her height of fame, lapped it up.

Alongside the newer songs she turned the clock back with *Dreaming*, *Call Me*, *Union City Blue* and many more. A great night. Thanks for the memories, Debbie. She will probably still be Atomic at 80.

SUE ATTWATER



Dave Gahan in action with Depeche Mode at Arena Birmingham on Sunday night

She-Wolf snarl of the UK's best band

Wolf Alice, O2 Academy, Birmingham

AS members of Wolf Alice surveyed a hot and heaving full-to-the-brim venue after a blistering 80-minute set they must have thought: It doesn't get much better than this.

I have seen the quartet go from third on the bill, main support, small hall bill toppers, to become the best young rock band in the UK.

If debut album 2015's *My Love Is Cool* was good, this year's *Visions Of A Life* is great. Songs from both featured at a gig that will have satisfied original fans and those that have come on board more recently.

Ellie Rowsell has become a force of nature, her voice running the full gamut from whisper to scream via she-devil snarl.

The mosh pit revelled in *Yuk Foo* and *You're A Germ*, fans loved the drama of *Formidable* and *Cool* and angular charm of *Beautifully Unconventional*. Rock epic *Visions Of A Life* showed why they will hold their own with metal monsters like Ozzy Osbourne at the Download Festival Paris next summer.

Earlier, homecoming heroes *Superfood* impressed with funky grooves (as heard on new album *Bambino*) and got the joint jumping with *Double Dutch*. New York trio *Sunflower Bean*'s neo-psychedelic swirl has a new swagger and a confident frontwoman in Julia Cumming.

LB

They're still in the Mode

Depeche Mode, Arena Birmingham

WHAT a strange long road it's been for Depeche Mode, from perky 80s synth kids to gnarly rock gods of the 21st century, and their army of fans has kept on growing.

With the Brum mega-venue full to capacity and covering quite an age range, it's a testament to the dark melodic appeal of the Mode that they still feel vital and current whilst many of their '80s contemporaries rely on the nostalgia circuit.

The original Essex trio of singer Dave Gahan, singer-guitarist Martin L Gore and keyboardist Andy Fletcher have been augmented into a five-piece band, who put on performance that packed a punch, if let down somewhat by the staging.

A video wall that spent some of the night in darkness, also leaving a gantry where Gahan strutted his stuff in shadows, meant that those at the back of the venue must have had to peer hard to catch a glimpse of the group through the dry ice haze.

But they will have heard them loud and clear with a powerhouse performance of songs spanning four decades, right up to and including this year's album *Spirit*, their 14th studio album.

Oddly the new album only contributed

three songs to the two-hour gig, including opener *Going Backwards*, but perhaps that's because the band have such a huge back catalogue to choose from.

Tattooed front man Gahan was in fine form, pirouetting and preening, in constant motion and exercising that resonant mellow vocal. He's grown distinctly Johnny Depp-like as he's got older, can rock a waistcoat like no other and his supple moves make him a walking advert for the benefits of yoga.

He did share vocal duties with chief songwriter Gore, who stepped into the limelight for *Insight*, the classic *Home* (both from 1997's *Ultra* album) and first encore *Strangelove*.

The fans, including thousands standing in the lower arena, loved the inclusion of 1983 hit *Everything Counts* and 1984's *Stripped*. But it was the tracks from seminal 1990 album *Violator* and 93's *Songs of Faith and Devotion* that really got the arena rocking with *In Your Room*, *Walking in My Shoes*, an extended version of *Enjoy the Silence* and final encore *Personal Jesus*, which got the whole arena roaring 'reach out and touch faith'.

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Golf club host craft fair

A CHRISTMAS craft fair is being held at a Bewdley golf club on Saturday to raise money for the West Midlands Air Ambulance. The fair at Bewdley Pines Golf Club will be held from 11am to 5pm. Stalls will include festive decorations, candles, children's clothes and customised cushions.

The raffle will include prizes donated by Kidderminster Harriers FC, Mercure Hotel, Bewdley Brewery, GoApe and others. Admission is free to the event at the Habberley Road venue in Bewdley, where there will also be refreshments.

Railway complaints 'could've been worse'

COMPLAINTS over railway services are 'disappointing' but not 'surprising', says Stourbridge MP Margot James.

New figures revealed Virgin Trains West Coast and Arriva Trains Wales, which both run through the region, were two of the most complained about operators. Cross Country and London Midlands also came in for criticism.

The Stourbridge Conservative MP, who is also the minister for small business, said: "It is disappointing to see the rail operators in this region being some of the most complained about, although I am not totally surprised."

"These figures are, however, from a period that is normally quieter on the trains. If these figures were for the months running up to Christmas, they could have been much worse."

"In terms of the complaints about London Midland's services, I am not surprised to see punctuality and capacity being key issues, indeed they are problems that the Chase Line passengers have suffered, particularly at this time of year."

Virgin Trains West Coast received 158 complaints per 100,000 passenger journeys from April to June. The service runs from Birmingham to Scotland stopping at Wolverhampton and Stafford.

Arriva Trains Wales had 106 complaints made per 100,000 journeys during the same period. The German-based firm operates the Wales and Border line,



Margot James MP

which starts from Birmingham and stops at Smethwick Galton Bridge and Wolverhampton. It will cease running the service in October next year.

The two companies come second and third in a national list of the most complained about operators in the three month period. Out of the 20 franchised rail operators, only the Caledonia Sleeper got more with 196 complaints.

Other franchises in the region include Cross Country and London Midland, with 42 and 31 complaints per 100,000 passenger journeys respectively.

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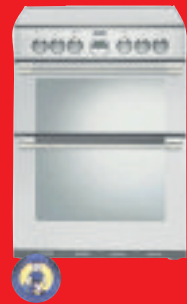
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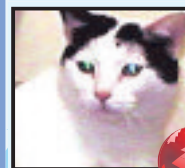
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Hospice putting on three Tree of Light remembrance ceremonies this Christmas

Mary Stevens Hospice are working with three local venues to host their annual remembrance ceremonies for Black Country residents this Winter.

The services are an opportunity for the local community to come together in remembrance of those they have loved and lost along the way.

A non-religious ceremony will be held at Hagley Golf Club on the evening of Wednesday 22nd November, at 7pm. Later that same evening, the iconic tree in the Hospice grounds will be lit, and remain on until Friday 5th January 2017.

St Mary's Church in Oldswinford will continue their support of the event by hosting the ceremony on Saturday 25th November at 4pm, before a final ceremony takes place on Sunday 26th November at St John the Baptist Church in Halesowen.

Marie Faux, Bereavement Support Officer, Mary Stevens Hospice said:

"Remembering those we have loved is a very important part of grieving.

At our Tree of Light ceremonies, we offer a special environment in which we give thanks for those memories and come together to support other members of our community through a difficult time.

There will be readings, music performed by



The Hospice Tree of Light is lit each year in remembrance of those who have passed away both at the Hospice and throughout the region

some very talented local artists and choirs, and the chance to light a candle or sponsor a light in memory of your loved one."

Attendees will also have the opportunity to either purchase a candle to light at the event, or sponsor a light on the Tree, which will be lit at the Hospice on the 22nd and remain alight until the 12th day of Christmas.

To purchase a candle or sponsor a light, please visit www.marystevenshospice.co.uk/http://www.marystevenshospice.co.uk/event/tree-light-2017/

For further information, please call the Hospice on 01384 377 778.

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Charity organising free festive fun weekend for local community

The first ever Stourbridge Sparkling Spectacular will take over Stourbridge on Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th December.

Day one of the festive fun weekend will take place in the grounds of the Mary Stevens Hospice, where guests will be treated to a Winter Wonderland craft market, live music, an all-day barbecue, a full day of children's craft activities, a gift-wrapping service and the chance for local children to meet both Santa and Rudolph.

Families will also be invited to take part in showings of "Sing-a-long Frozen", as well as enjoying Christmas story time where the children in attendance will have "The night before Christmas" read to them to get them in the Christmas spirit.

Then on Sunday 10th, alongside the Hagley Road charity's annual Santa Jog, the festivities will move to Mary Stevens Park where there will be an all-day festive food festival, a full day of live bands and entertainment, the opportunity to watch or take part in the Santa Jog and a free family fun day.

Day one will run from 10:30-4pm, and day two will run from 10:00-4pm.

Both days of the festive weekend have been sponsored in full by Stourbridge Motor House.

Laura Millard, Community Engagement Officer, Mary Stevens Hospice said:

"It's difficult to know where to start when we're talking about this, everything is just so exciting and there's so much to look forward to.

In our opinion, this time of year is all about coming together as a community and enjoying the remarkable unity that exists here in the Black Country.



Children enjoying the Hospice Santa Jog in Mary Stevens Park last year!

It's our great privilege to be so supported by so many families across the region, and we hope that they all enjoy what promises to be a truly unforgettable weekend."

Jason Stewart, General Manager, Stourbridge Motor House, said:

"As your local Vauxhall family run business, Stourbridge Motor House are proud to be supporting the first ever Stourbridge Sparkling Spectacular and we look forward to bringing our local community together during the most wonderful time of the year."

To find out more about the festive weekend or book the package to see Santa and Rudolph call 01384 377 778, or go online to www.marystevenshospice.co.uk/event/stourbridge-sparkling-spectacular

To find out more about Vauxhall Stourbridge Motor House, please visit <https://www.stourbridgemotorhouse.co.uk/>

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Hippodrome talk sparks memories

Wollaston E TWG

FORTY seven members were present at the October meeting, which in the absence of chairman Julie Willets, was presided over by vice chairman Sue Ward. Apologies were read, followed by the minutes of the previous meeting.

The treasurer reported that the club was in a healthy position financially.

A thank you card had been received from a new member, expressing her appreciation to the guild for making her feel so welcome.

Sue Ward mentioned a federation arts and crafts event, taking place in Derbyshire. The bowling season was concluded with a series of friendly matches against the Sons of Rest. Glenys Allen will receive the trophy for winning this season's guild bowling championship.

Members were so enthralled by the Victorian Evening at Haden Hill House that interest was expressed in the December 7 Christmas candlelit night.

Speaker for the evening was Peter Glews, a local historian whose subject was Dudley Hippodrome. Peter's talk, accompanied by slides and old films, made members feel very nostalgic, and keen to join in many old songs performed by past stars. At the conclusion members were most enthusiastic in showing their appreciation.

Raffle prizes went to Brenda Adkins and June Lees.

Vital items boxed up for Christmas



Local co-ordinator Deborah Slater and guild members with the donated items

AT a previous meeting, Sedgley Morning Townswomen's Guild Committee discussed Christmas, having previously contributed shoe boxes for children.

However this year, the guild decided to consider that every child has a mother.

In the Midlands mothers and their children are being driven out of their homes through abuse of one type or another.

Often these women seek help at a local refuge, literally with just the clothes they are wearing. Christmas is a flash point in many cases, so having spoken to the local Womens' Aid Centre, the guild's committee decided to appeal for donations of essential items, for example toiletries, sanitary

Sedgley Morning Townswomen's Guild

products and clothes. Deborah Slater, the local co-ordinator, accepted the gifts from members.

The large box was full, with items also including seasonal gifts to hopefully bring a smile to a victim's face at Christmas, and to let them know that people do care.

Only after the meeting, did several members admit that they had relatives who had suffered in the past either physical or mental abuse from partners they loved and had believed loved them.

Entertainment from strummers

THERE was a lot of business to get through at the November 13 meeting at the Community Centre, High Street, Kingswinford.

The Federation report emphasised the Christmas celebration in St Thomas's Church, Stourbridge on De-

Kingswinford TG

cember 9. Enid issued a reminder that new committee members would be needed.

Dawn Hampton was thanked for the pot plant she provided for the chair-

man's table, which she donated as a raffle prize. The collection box was put out for those who wished to donate in lieu of cards.

The Kingswinford Strummers gave an enjoyable performance. Chris Moy gave thanks.

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Hark back to Victorian era over Christmas

ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES

with John Ridgway of Perry & Phillips



I WAS reminded this week just how popular Victoriana continues to be when the Bridgnorth Players approached me looking for props to use in their forthcoming production of the Dickens classic A Christmas Carol.

The charm of the Victorian era is seemingly ever-lasting.

We tend to forget how grim it must have truly been in poverty-stricken areas during that time and remember only the pretty things!

And I must admit it was a time for elaborate decoration in terms of almost everything, from clothing to furniture.

Almost anything Victorian has a place in modern homes, from kitchen items to dining tables and chairs.

Blue and white china tea-sets, dinner services, soup tureens and covered dishes all look good on display in a kitchen.

The Victorians loved lace and used it for a variety of purposes – you can still buy tablecloths, napkins, valences, pillow cases, nightdress cases and numerous other items with lace decoration in excellent condition.

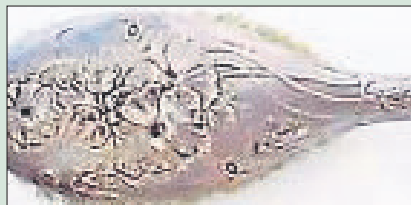
Silver-backed hairbrush sets and wooden jewellery boxes look great in a modern bedroom and silver candlesticks add an elegant touch to any room.

Prints and mirrors can again add a little vintage charm around the home and items used in a Victorian bathroom, such as soap dishes, towel rails and even porcelain inhalers, can have a new lease of life on display in a contemporary bath or shower room.

Good quality Victorian furniture can really complement a modern room setting, look out for pretty occasional tables and chaises.

And of course the more quirky items sell well – a top hat, a parasol or a silver-topped walking cane look charming in a modern hallway for example.

- Perry and Phillips hold valuation days, for sale items only, every Wednesday from 10am until 4pm.
- The next Perry and Phillips sale of antiques and collectables takes place at the Mill Street saleroom in Low Town, Bridgnorth on Tuesday, December 5 – our Christmas auction. Viewing will be during the weekend and on Monday and also from 10am on auction day
- New sale bidders are advised to attend the sale-room early on auction day to register and be allocated a bidding number.
- Perry and Phillips hold sales on the first Tuesday of every other month.



Uniforms remain a huge part of our daily lives



Military uniforms worn for parades

THE uniform is a way of belonging, being part of a group, team or organisation. It can inspire trust, build morale or even instil fear.

Today we see uniforms everywhere, even wearing your favourite football team strip is a form of belonging.

Delivery company drivers wear a uniform so we know they are an official part of the company they work for, fast food outlets ensure staff are neatly dressed in matching outfits and factory workers wear clothing that protects them and may also define their position.

Most businesses cannot run smoothly without this conformity. We are more comfortable when employees are dressed in uniform, it gives us more confidence in products and service and most customer facing jobs require a uniform.

Military uniform is still very distinctive, the first military uniform traces back to 210BC in China and the terracotta warriors. This clothing was originally provided to identify your own army and your enemy during bat-

STYLE FOCUS

with Janet Timmis



tle and definition of the rank system. Modern uniform is much more technical and practical for its intended use and protection against the dangers of today. Each country has its own design and even different camouflage patterns. Dress uniform has not changed and is still worn for ceremonial occasions.

Authority uniform includes, police, fire-fighters, rescue workers, traffic wardens, judges, nurses and doctors. Their uniform may change dependant on the area in which they work but they are still noticeable and obvious to us. Many uniforms need to conform to very specific health and safety requirements and cannot be worn in certain environments without meeting very strict compliance rules.

School uniform, supermarket staff, prison garb, brownies, cubs, guides and scouts, religious group members, airline staff and flight attendants, commodity traders, chefs, motor-

ing rescue patrolmen and chauffeurs wear distinctive garments so we can immediately note who they are. We are surrounded by this conformity.

In fashion we have seen, glam rockers, skin-heads, punks, and many more music based cultures throughout the years that define an era with the clothing worn by its followers.

Sport is very important in our society, the professionals earning high pay-outs for winning.

Each sport has its own particular clothing requirement and inspires a huge following, this too is a type of uniform, showing a belonging with no definition of age, standing in society or financial position.

Most of us will wear some type of uniform for work or leisure. Look around you and take note of how many different uniforms there are and how familiar they are to us. It is also a fantastic way of advertising our businesses, charities and events. It is a huge part of our day-to-day lives.

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A third of the shoppers will overspend – just to qualify for free delivery



Make sure the thrill of a bargain doesn't lead to a debt hangover

Avoid costly shopping mistakes at Christmas

THOSE festive special offers might look tempting, but a little bit of preparation now could help you avoid costly shopping regrets.

It's that time of year again – when people prepare to roll up their sleeves and take part in shopping frenzies such as Black Friday.

But before you start shelling out, pause for a moment and consider whether you could be a little more savvy with your cash. Are you really going after the best bargains? Will you regret splashing out too much come January?

Here are seven things you need to know before starting your Christmas shopping...

1. Is it really a bargain?

Just because a shop is advertising 'mega discounts', is the item you're after really cheaper than it would be at another time of year? Do some homework now, when you're less under pressure to have Christmas all wrapped up - and you'll have a better idea later on if you're really getting a great deal.

2. Can you take it back?

Swot up on your consumer rights. While there are general rules, it's worth asking stores about their individual policies when it comes to 'goodwill' returns if you simply change your mind. The Consumer Rights Act spells out consumers' rights to refunds on faulty items and makes it easier to challenge hidden fees and charges.

3. How you pay can give you added protections if anything goes wrong

Consumer group Which? explains that under section 75

By Victoria Shaw

of the Consumer Credit Act, your credit card company is jointly liable if something goes wrong with a product or a service you've paid for with that card.

If you've spent more than £100 and less than £30,000 on something, you can claim in this way if something goes wrong. You don't have to have paid the full amount on your credit card, either. Which? says to qualify for the protections, it's the value of the goods you're buying that is key, not the amount paid on the card.

4. Check the website you're buying from is genuine

Myles Dawson, UK country manager at Adyen, which processes payments, says with many limited-period deals on offer, shoppers may be tempted to let their guard down. "It helps to stick to retailers you know are reputable. That is not to say that any online retailer you haven't heard of should be on the black list, but take the time to do a little research and look for reviews," he says.

"Checking your emails carefully is also crucial. Fraudsters are becoming increasingly sophisticated at mimicking legitimate retailers. They know it's easy for you to get caught in the moment when a great offer lands in your inbox.

"Take a few moments to check the email address of the sender is legitimate and look closely at the destination of a link, before clicking it. This helps avoid ending up on a spoofed website and mistakenly providing your card details and personal information to fraudsters."

5. Factor in delivery charges

Two-thirds (67 per cent) of shoppers say they would not be willing to buy online if the delivery costs are too high, according to a survey by delivery management company Whistl.

Some online stores offer free delivery for shoppers who spend over a certain amount when making a purchase.

And while it may be considered quite cheeky, a third of the shoppers surveyed admitted they will overspend – knowing they will later send some items back – just to qualify for free delivery.

Patience can help cut delivery costs.

Half (50 per cent) of those surveyed would be willing to wait an extra two to three days in exchange for free delivery – while more than a quarter (28 per cent) would wait four to five days longer.

6. Will your shopping spree put you in debt?

Make sure the thrill of a bargain doesn't lead to a debt hangover. Set a budget, and if you're paying by credit card, pay it off in full before any charges apply.

Keep track of your account balance – busting an overdraft limit could also make a purchase very expensive, once you factor in those bank charges.

7. Cut the costs

Voucher and cashback websites can help trim back costs. And if you don't mind risking someone else snapping it up, try leaving your item in your online shopping basket and see if the store tries to nudge you by emailing a discount code.

It does happen!

ANTON SINGS A DIFFERENT TUNE

INSIDE

THEATRE + MUSIC + PUZZLES + TV GUIDE

Advertisement feature

Red House Glass Cone

There is lots happening over the festive season at Red House Glass Cone, for the first time ever we are hosting a Christmas Tree Festival and there are over 17 trees around the site making the Cone feel really Christmassy.

On 25-26 November there is a Christmas Craft Market and Teenage Market the chance to buy a unique handmade gifts and enjoy seasonal entertainment, this a joint event with the White House Cone.

Santa will coming to Cone 9 and 10 and 16-23 December to book to see him call (01384) 815571

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Why Anton's in the mood for singing

We start with a moment described perfectly accurately and unallegorically on YouTube as this: Ruth Langford rides Anton

Du Beke.

For those just back from a long holiday in Outer Mongolia, we'll recap. At the start of the month, Strictly's Anton Du Beke unexpectedly found himself pinned to the ground beneath the beautiful, perfectly-manicured Singapore-born presenter. And then she sort of wriggled a bit. And shimmied. Jeez.

Anton laughs. No doubt he's recounted that moment dozens of times, but he's game again this morning. Was he horrified when the two of them went down?

He laughs again. "No, I told Ruth it had been her best move."

There's a pause. Then we both laugh. "It was one of those things. It was not her fault. Everything goes into slow motion when things like that happen."

"You think: 'I've got this, I'll just adjust.' Then it's 'Jesus, I don't think I've got this. And you wait for the ground to arrive at your back side.'"

Anton thought it was a hoot when it happened - and still does.

"It was hilarious. It was one of the funniest moments ever on Strictly. The crowd went mad."

We have more to talk about, however, like Anton's forthcoming tour and his decision to try to emulate his Rat Pack heroes like Frank and Sammy D.

Anton, TV's most sartorial man, is The Entertainer. And in addition to tripping the light fantastic on Strictly, he's been recording a debut album in the studio, From The Top.

PASSION

"I'm so excited to announce my debut album. It's been a passion project of mine for years to be able to do something like this."

"I hope people enjoy it. I've loved every second of it. There's some old songs. Some new songs. And definitely some songs you can dance to."

It features classics like Putting On The Ritz, Fly Me To The Moon, Don't Rain On My Parade and It's The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year.

It's something he'd wanted to do forever, but took a while to bring together.

"I'm never quite sure how one gets from Point A to Point B sometimes. The same was true when I was watching Fred Astaire when I was young, I wanted to be like him but I wasn't sure of the path from a Church Hall in Kent to becoming Fred Astaire."

And with music, I've never been sure how to get from the shower to singing Fly Me To The Moon in a studio with a great producer."

Anton worked on the record with Polydor and he was delighted with their support.

"You just want someone to say to you: 'Listen, it's great, keep going.' You get self-conscious and you don't really know whether it's any good. But it's been a wonderful experience."

"It's the music of my life. It's music I loved growing up with and music I danced to. Being able to sing it and get others dancing is the greatest joy."

Anton grew up watching the greats. He was enchanted by Sammy Davis Jr, Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra as well as the wonderful arrangements by Nelson Riddle and Quincy Jones. He worked with a 36-piece orchestra on his album

Best moves - Anton with Strictly dance partner Ruth Langford



to create new arrangements and the results are plain to see.

Anton is habitually tied up during the run-in to Christmas, what, with Strictly an all. But he'll be road testing some of the songs when he tours the UK from January to March.

"I'll be back on tour after the new year and I'll be coming back to the Symphony Hall in Birmingham - I do love that venue. I'll be dancing and singing, as I normally do. But if anybody's been to see me on tour, they know I sing a bit both on Strictly and on my own tours."

"I keep saying this, I don't want it to sound odd, but the sound of the album is incredible. It's such a brilliant sound they put together in the studio."

The team who worked with Anton to produce his album blew him away. They were simultaneously supportive and honest, scrutinising everything he did to make sure he reached his potential. "I worked with a guy called Brian Rawlings, who has worked with the greats. He's done projects with Andrea Bocelli, Cher, everyone. When I went to the studio, the walls were lined with platinum discs."

It was one of the funniest moments ever on Strictly. The crowd went mad

So does Anton want to follow in those footsteps? Does he want to be lining his own walls with a bunch of silver, gold and platinum discs? You can bet he does.

"I hope it goes absolutely massive, I hope I get a platinum disc and people say it's incredible. But we'll have to wait and see whether that actually happens, we'll have to wait and see. I love it so much that I want other people to love it."

"This type of big band music is still being done and has stood the test of time. We'll have to wait and see in the future what still gets repeated in the same way from today's era. The songs I've re-recorded are great in their own right. The hard bit for me was choosing what to leave out."

In the final analysis, making people happy is what The Entertainer is all about. And he plans to keep dancing for as long as possible. "For now, I still love dancing. Doing the paso doble and samba and ripping my trousers off - I live for those moments. Or dancing with Nadiya and doing a beautiful foxtrot while Seal is singing: those are the moments you live for."

Andy Richardson

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.

Festive favourite The Nutcracker



Christmas cracker of a ballet is a traditional treat

Birmingham Royal Ballet's annual festive treat, The Nutcracker, opens at Birmingham Hippodrome tomorrow night (Friday).

Sir Peter Wright's magical production runs until December 13 and has been an annual seasonal tradition since the company moved from London and took on the city's name more than 25 years ago.

This world-acclaimed production with its classic story of an incredible Christmas journey, features glorious dancing and instantly recognisable romantic music from Tchaikovsky.

Join Clara as she is swept into an enchanting winter wonderland of whirling snowflakes, a handsome prince, wicked rats and a Sugar Plum Fairy.

It is spectacular with lavish costumes and

monumental sets, and amazing effects including a Christmas tree that grows before your eyes and Clara's flight on the back of a swan to a magical land.

The Nutcracker has captured the hearts and imaginations of generations of theatregoers, becoming an annual fixture at the Hippodrome, which is Birmingham Royal Ballet's home theatre. In fact, Christmas in Birmingham just wouldn't be the same without it.

In this most festive of ballets 60 dancers and a full orchestra – the Royal Ballet Sinfonia – combine to make the perfect Christmas treat for the entire family.

This production with exquisite designs by John Macfarlane is acclaimed as one of the best in the world.

Grease is still the one that you want



Grease is the word at Wolverhampton Grand where the latest tour of the much-loved rock 'n' roll musical arrives on Monday and will run until Saturday, December 2.

Tom Parker, pictured, formerly of boy band The Wanted, is making make his musical theatre debut as Danny Zuko, the role made famous in the movie by the young John Travolta.

Danielle Hope, who was Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz at the London Palladium after winning BBC TV's Over The Rainbow, will step into Olivia Newton-John's high heel shoes as Sandy.

Wisecracking Rizzo will be played by EastEnders and The Bill star Louisa Lytton, one of the youngest Strictly Come Dancing competitors in 2006. George Olney is Teen Angel/Vince Fontaine.

Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey's musical, set in an American high

school during the rock 'n' roll era, features such songs as You're The One That I Want, Summer Nights, Greased Lightnin' and Hopelessly Devoted To You. It has been choreographed by Arlene Phillips and directed by David Gilmore, who was also at the helm for stage versions of Happy Days and Footloose.

This production opened in the West End, where it had a six year run, and has toured ever since.

It's a Cruella winter at the Rep

Birmingham Rep is set for a paw-some festive season with The Hundred and One Dalmatians on stage from Thursday (November 30) to January 13. Debbie Isitt (Nativity!) adapts the family favourite story by Dodie Smith, which was turned into an animated classic by Disney. It is brought to life on stage with puppetry devised by director Tessa Walker and designer Jamie Vartan. Former Birmingham student Gloria Onitiri, above, makes her Rep debut as wicked Cruella de Vil.



Rag'N'Bone Man is only Human at Civic

One of the breakout stars of 2017, Rag'N'Bone Man, has sold out the Civic Hall on Monday for his first Wolverhampton gig. Without doubt 2017 has been his year, emerging from the Brighton music scene, his debut album has been a huge hit worldwide, containing the international hit Human, which went to Number 1 on iTunes in more than 40 countries. The harmonious sound of America folk-rockers Fleet Foxes can be heard at the Civic tomorrow night (Friday), whilst punk veterans Sham 69 are at the Slade Rooms. There's a sell-out again at the venue on Saturday for former leading members of The Beautiful South, Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbott. Highlights at the Robin 2 in Bilston include '80s duo China Crisis on Sunday and former Zombies frontman Colin Blunstone on Monday.

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Wordsley's very own Entertainment Centre

Chris Miller has now been running The Ashwood Inn for coming up to 4 years. He prides himself on the entertainment and events put on there. With regular Live singers every Friday, to Dart Competitions as well as hosting local events to raise money for charities close to their hearts there is always something to look forward to here.

The Ashwood Inn isn't short of space making a great place to host events. Anything from Birthdays, Christening's,

Anniversaries, wakes they have something available to cater for all requirements and all ages holding up to 120 People also providing catering again which can be adapted to individual preference and budgets. Chris will go above and beyond to make sure everything is to requirements and nothing is too much trouble. Will a pool table and Juke box also on hand to get stuck into in theres no greater place to spend your time!



Saturday 25th November Chris is hosting a Mega Charity Night in aid of The Marsh Family. 7pm till late with Wordleys Own "The Front Covers" live on stage. Raffle with great prizes and a mega Auction so grab your tickets for £3 each now on sale. All for a great cause.

CHOICE



Joe Orton

Joe Orton Laid Bare (BBC2, 9pm)
Documentary exploring the wit, work and world of Joe Orton, the Leicester-born playwright and author whose flourishing literary career was cut short when he was killed by his boyfriend Kenneth Halliwell in 1967. Fifty years after his demise, this film charts Orton's meteoric rise to fame following his imprisonment in 1962 for defacing library books. Orton believed his sentence was unduly harsh, and had more to do with the fact he was homosexual than the crime itself, but his time in prison allowed him to crystallise his distinctive worldview. Here, excerpts from his stage and TV plays, along with his personal diaries, outline his outrageous perspective, and the circumstances of his death are re-examined.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. 11.30 Nigella: At My Table. (R)
12.00 Football Focus. 1.00 BBC News: Weather. 1.15 Rugby League World Cup. 2.00 Live International Rugby Union. Scotland v Australia (Kick-off 2.30pm). 4.30 Final Score. 5.15 Len Goodman's Partners in Rhyme. 5.45 BBC News. 5.55 Regional Programme.
6.00 Pointless Celebrities. Simon Wood, Jane Devonshire, Lee McQueen, Yasmina Siadatan, Sam Bailey, Michelle McManus, George Sampson and Jermaine Jackson take part in a "TV Winner" edition of the quiz show.
6.50 Strictly Come Dancing. The seven remaining pro-celebrity duos return to the Elstree studio, in the wake of their expedition to the Lancashire coast last weekend for the annual Blackpool Tower special. The competition will be no less intense on coming back to familiar territory, though, as the celebrities and their seasoned dancing partners draw closer to the grand final. Judges Shirley Ballas, Bruno Tonioli, Darcy Bussell and Craig Revel Horwood are on hand to assess each pairing's skills as they all tackle the Paso Doble at the same time in a "Pasodoblation". As ever, though, the impressing the judges is only half of the battle, as the stars must also gain the approval of the viewing public, who are given a chance to have their say over who should stay in the running.
8.10 Michael McIntyre's Big Show. EastEnders star Danny Dyer hands over his phone in Celebrity Sent to All, and Gary Barlow puts in a special appearance. Plus, performances by Russell Kane and Clean Bandit.
9.10 Casualty. Connie attends her first day of chemotherapy, and when Ethan tries to take the lead in her absence, his overly thorough approach causes massive delays.
10.00 BBC News: Weather: National Lottery Update.
10.20 Match of the Day. Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, which included Liverpool v Chelsea, and Tottenham Hotspur v West Bromwich Albion.
11.45 The NFL Show.
12.15 Film: Obsessed. (2009) 2.00 Weather for the Week Ahead. 2.05 BBC News.

BBC2

**7.30 Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. 8.00 Deadly 60. (R) 8.30 Show Me What You're Made Of: UK. 9.00 Saturday Mash-Up! 11.00 Natural World: Chimps of the Lost Gorge. (R) 12.00 Tom Kerridge's Best Ever Dishes. (R) 12.30 Raymond Blanc: How to Cook Well. (R) 1.00 Coast. (R) 1.20 Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers: Talking Pictures. (R) 2.10 Film: Daddy Long Legs. (1955) Romantic musical, starring Fred Astaire and Leslie Caron. 4.15 Britain Afloat. 4.45 Live International Rugby Union. Wales v New Zealand (Kick-off 5.15pm). 7.30 International Rugby Union. England v Samoa. Sara Orchard presents action from the autumn international at Twickenham, which saw England attempt to extend their unbeaten run against the Samoans.
8.30 Dad's Army. Mainwaring camps the platoon in the middle of a firing range, forcing Corporal Jones to make a desperate effort to raise the alarm. (R)
9.00 Joe Orton Laid Bare. Documentary charting the rise to fame of playwright and author Joe Orton, whose literary career was cut short when he was killed by his boyfriend Kenneth Halliwell in 1967.
10.20 QI XL. Sally Phillips, Ross Noble and Nish Kumar join regular panellist Alan Davies and host Sandi Toksvig for an extended version of the comedy quiz show. This time, the topic is 'Odorous and Odious'. During the course of the show, the panellists learn why the world's second-smelliest man is so frustrated. As ever, correctness and even intelligence go out of the window, as the fiendishly difficult questions lead to points being awarded for the answers its questionmaster finds most interesting, as opposed to correct.
11.05 Insert Name Here. Nish Kumar, Kate Williams, Katherine Ryan and Gabby Logan join host Sue Perkins and captains Richard Osman and Josh Widdicombe as the comedy quiz returns. (R)
11.35 Film: Albert Nobbs. (2011) A woman living in disguise as a man in 19th-century Ireland decides to find a wife after a meeting with a fellow cross-dresser. Drama, with Glenn Close and Mia Wasikowska.
1.20 Film: Chances Are. (1989) 3.05 This Is BBC Two.**

ITV

**6.00 CITV: Sooty. 6.10 Bottom Knocker Street. (R) 6.20 Bottom Knocker Street. (R) 6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) 6.45 Super 4. (R) 7.00 Mission Employable. (R) 7.05 Oddbods. (R) 7.10 Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. 7.30 Scrambled!: Scrambled! 7.35 Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) 7.50 Scrambled!: Fangbone. (R) 8.10 Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) 8.30 Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. 9.00 Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R) 9.25 ITV News. 9.30 Saturday Morning with James Martin. 11.25 Gino's Italian Coastal Escape. (R) 11.50 ITV News: Weather. 12.00 The X Factor. (R) 1.30 ITV Racing: Live from Haydock. Coverage of this afternoon's meetings at Haydock Park and Ascot. 4.00 Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) 4.25 The Harbour. (R) 4.55 The Chase. (R) 5.55 New You've Been Framed!
6.20 Regional Programme: Weather. 6.25 ITV News: Weather. 6.35 Ninja Warrior UK. Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara host the final heat, as competitors from across the UK test their strength, speed and courage in the obstacle-course challenge. (R)
7.30 The X Factor: The Semi Finals. The conclusion of the musical talent show creeps ever closer, as the contest reaches the semi-finals. Throughout the live stages, surprise double eliminations, extra sing-offs and an increased number of public votes have tested not only the contestants' singing skills, but also their ability to master their nerves, and the pressure is bound to be higher than ever with the Grand Final taking place next weekend. Dermot O'Leary welcomes the performers back to the stage for another set, as Cowell and his fellow judges – Louis Walsh, Nicole Scherzinger and Sharon Osbourne – deliver their verdicts, before giving viewers at home a chance to have their say.
9.10 I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! Ant and Dec catch up with the celebrity castaways as their first week in the camp draws to a close, and they prepare for a Bushucker Trial.
10.10 ITV News: Weather. 10.30 Film: Rambo: First Blood Part II. (1985) Action adventure sequel, with Sylvester Stallone.
12.20 Jackpot247. 3.00 The Hungry Sailors. (R) 3.50 ITV Nightscreen.**

CHANNEL 4

**6.05 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 6.30 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) 6.55 Frasier. (R) 7.20 Frasier. (R) 7.45 The Big Bang Theory. 8.15 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 8.35 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 9.00 The Simpsons. (R) 9.25 The Simpsons. (R) 9.55 Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Practice 3 Live. The Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. 11.25 F1 Meets Niki Lauda. 11.55 Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Qualifying Live. The Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. 2.45 World's Most Expensive Cars. (R) 3.45 A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) 4.30 Best Laid Plans. 5.30 Grand Designs. (R)
6.25 Channel 4 News. 6.45 Film: The Day After Tomorrow. (2004) A climatologist warns global warming will soon result in destructive freak weather, or even another ice age. He thinks the world still has time to prepare for the worst, but the crisis happens almost immediately – and as storms, earthquakes and hurricanes strike in terrifying fashion, he races across America to rescue his son from a frozen New York. Disaster thriller, with Jake Gyllenhaal and Dennis Quaid.
9.00 Film: Ex Machina. (2015) Premiere. A computer programmer working for the world's biggest search engine is given the opportunity to spend a week at the remote home of his boss, a hi-tech genius. The break turns out to be an elaborate experiment, in which he must test the world's first truly artificial intelligence, which is housed in the body of a beautiful robot girl. Sci-fi drama, starring Domhnall Gleeson, Alicia Vikander and Oscar Isaac.
11.05 Film: Lone Survivor. (2013) Four soldiers face a battle for survival while on a mission to eliminate a terrorist leader in Afghanistan. Fact-based drama, starring Mark Wahlberg and Taylor Kitsch.
1.15 The Last Leg. American comedian Margaret Cho joins the regulars. (R) **2.10 Hollyoaks.** Omnibus. Louis and Leela are frantic when baby Daniel goes missing. **4.20 Location, Location, Location.** Phil Spencer helps a couple searching for a home in south-west London. (R) **5.15 Draw It! (R) 5.40 Film: The Parent Trap. (1961)** Twin sisters who want their estranged parents to get back together swap places in a play to reunite them. Disney comedy, with Hayley Mills in a dual role alongside Maureen O'Hara.**

CHANNEL 5

**6.00 Milkshake! 9.55 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) 10.30 The Gadget Show. (R) 11.25 Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud. (R) 11.55 Film: A Christmas Reunion. (2015) 1.40 Film: Santa Who? (2000) Family comedy, starring Leslie Nielsen. 3.25 Film: Angels in the Snow. (2015) Family drama, starring Kristy Swanson. 4.25 5 News Update. 4.30 Film: Angels in the Snow. (2015) Concluded. 5.15 Film: Love You Like Christmas. (2016) Premiere. Romantic drama, starring Bonnie Somerville and Brennan Elliott.
6.15 5 News Update. 6.20 Film: Love You Like Christmas. (2016) Concluded.
7.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. In Coventry, the sheriffs chase £10,000 owed by a publican to a contractor. The property appears to be empty, but after finding an ingenious method of entry, Matt and Garry are confronted by a surprised and angry landlord. Meanwhile, agents Max and Steve head to central London to try to recover almost £8,000 owed to a firm of accountants. (R)
8.00 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. Agents try to recover almost £2,000 owed by the owner of a bridal shop in London, while officers in Kent chase over £4,000 of vet fees after two neighbouring dogs got into a fight. (R)
8.55 5 News Weekend. 9.00 Football on 5: The Championship. Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games in the Championship, including Barnsley v Leeds United, Aston Villa v Ipswich Town and Burton Albion v Sunderland.
10.00 Football on 5: Goal Rush. Colin Murray introduces all the goals from Leagues One and Two, including AFC Wimbledon v Walsall, Blackburn Rovers v Bristol Rovers and Coventry City v Crawley Town.
10.30 NCIS: New Orleans. A sailor from Mississippi is murdered, and when it becomes clear the man was also a biker, the agents begin to suspect his death might be the result of an old gang rivalry.
11.25 NCIS: New Orleans. A petty officer is found dead, and the only witness to the crime is the woman's nine-year-old nephew.
12.15 SuperCasino. 3.10 When Calls the Heart. (R) 4.40 Access. (R)**

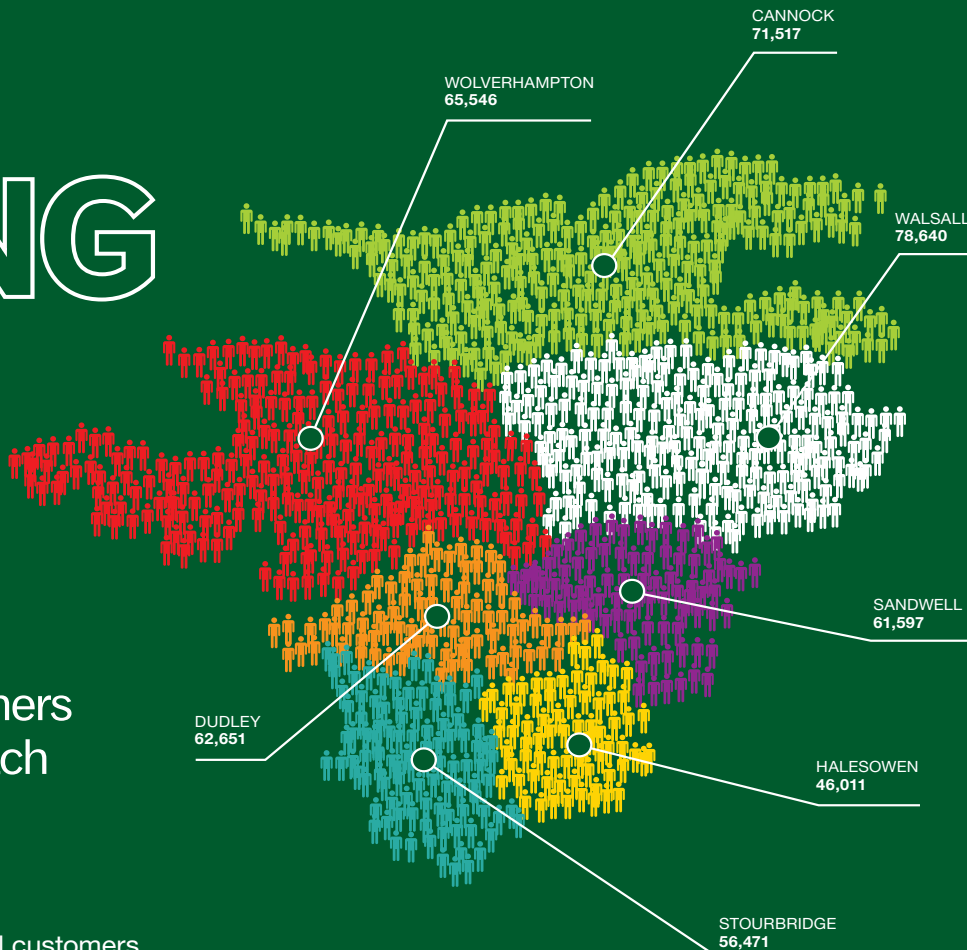
DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Nature's Misfits: Natural World **8.00** The Mekong River with Sue Perkins **9.00** Witnesses: A Frozen Death **10.50** The Vietnam War **11.50** What a Performance! Pioneers of Popular Entertainment **12.50** A Blackpool Big Band Boogie: Jools Holland and His Rhythm & Blues Orchestra **1.50** Nature's Misfits: Natural World **2.50** The Mekong River with Sue Perkins **3.50** Close
ITV2
11.50 Take Me Out Celebrity Special **12.50** Harry Hill's Alien Fun Capsule **1.25** Film: Beethoven's 2nd (1993) **2.25** FYI Daily **2.30** Film: Beethoven's 2nd (1993) **3.10** Film: Step Up (2006) **4.15** FYI Daily **4.20** Film: Step Up (2006) **5.20** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **6.50** Film: Inception (2010) **7.50** FYI Daily **7.55** Film: Inception (2010) **9.40** Family Guy **10.10** I'm a Celebrity: Extra Camp **11.10** Family Guy **11.40** American Dad! **12.40** Release the Hounds **1.40** Viral Tap **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.55** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
11.10 FYI Daily **11.15** Film: Murder on the Orient Express (1974) **12.50** Film: Columbo: Make Me a Perfect Murder (1978) **2.50** Agatha Christie's Marple **5.00** Margery and Gladys **7.00** Midsomer Murders **11.05** The Syndicate **12.10** The Blonde Bombshell **2.10** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping
ITV4
12.45 Live Darts: Players Championship Finals. Coverage of day two from Butlins Minehead. **5.00** Nijinsky's Triple Crown **5.05** Pawn Stars **7.00** Live Darts: Players Championship Finals. Coverage of day two from Butlins Minehead. **11.00** Film: Full Metal Jacket (1987) **1.20** The Classic Car Show **2.20** The Protectors **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping
E4
11.00 How I Met Your Mother **12.00** Film: Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel (2009) **1.50** Rude (ish) Tube Shorts **2.00** The Goldbergs **4.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: Oblivion (2013) **11.30** Gogglebox **1.35** Rude Tube **2.35** First Dates **3.30** How I Met Your Mother **4.15** Rules of Engagement
Film4
11.00 Rio (2011) **1.00** Field of Dreams (1989) **3.20** Avatar (2009) **6.30** The Riot Club Interview Special **6.40** Ender's Game (2013) **9.00** 2 Guns (2013) **11.10** Tank 432 (2015) **12.55** Immortals (2011)

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CHOICE



Guy Martin

Guy Martin vs the Robocar (Channel 4, 9pm)
According to predictions, in just over 10 years' time, half of all new cars sold will be electric and 15 per cent of them will be self-driving. But where does that leave Guy Martin? In this documentary, he tries to get to grips with autonomous vehicles by building his own robotic Ford Transit in his shed, where he discovers that the hardest part is replicating human thought. So, he travels to Budapest and the US to learn more about artificial intelligence and the morality tests the software engineers must grapple with, such as should a self-driving car save its passenger or a pedestrian in an emergency scenario. And in the ultimate test, Guy takes to the track to become the first person to pit his driving skills against an AI race car.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.30** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Fern Britton Meets Gregory Porter. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News: Weather. **1.15** Elizabeth & Philip: Love and Duty. (R) **2.15** Mary Berry's Country House Secrets. (R) **3.15** Songs of Praise. **3.55** Alan Shearer: Dementia. Football and Me. (R) **4.55** Blue Planet II. (R) **5.55** BBC News.
6.10 **Regional Programme.**
6.20 **Countryfile.** The team visits the Cairngorms, where Joe Crowley explores Britain's largest nature reserve and one of its highest mountains, and Helen Skelton goes in search of golden eagles. Plus, Adam Henson prepares for next year's new arrivals on his farm and Tom Heap reports on the British chicken industry.
7.20 **Strictly Come Dancing: The Results.** Tess Daly and Claudia Winkelman reveal the results of last night's viewers' vote and another couple leaves the contest. Featuring a performance from Kelly Clarkson.
8.00 **Blue Planet II.** Footage of wildlife inhabiting underwater kelp forests, including thousands of giant cuttlefish spawning along a restricted area of rocky reef off the south coast of Australia. Males outnumber females 11 to one, which leads to fierce competition. Larger males use brute force to drive off competition, while their smaller rivals use deception by mimicking the appearance of females. The programme also features tiger sharks hunting for green turtles in feds of seagrass and spider crabs trying to avoid predators while they shed their shells.
9.00 **Howards End.** Margaret receives an offer which changes her plans significantly, while Evie's wedding brings the Schlegel, Bast and Wilcox families together – and drags secrets into the light.
10.00 **BBC News.**
10.20 **Regional Programme.**
10.30 **Match of the Day 2.** Mark Chapman reviews the day's Premier League action.
11.30 **Ronny Chieng: International Student.** Ronny agrees to fill in for Asher at her job.
11.55 **Weather for the Week Ahead.**
12.00 **BBC News.**

BBC2

6.05 Coast. (R) **6.50** A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.35** The Secret History of the British Garden. (R) **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.00** Food & Drink. (R) **11.30** My Life on a Plate. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** International Rugby Union. (R) **2.00** Ghost Bear Family: Natural World. (R) **3.00** Demolition: The Wrecking Crew. (R) **4.00** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.45** Flog It! (R) **5.45** Turkey with Simon Reeve. (R)
6.45 **Film: Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day.** (2014) Premiere. An 11-year-old boy has a day where everything seems to go wrong, but gets no sympathy from his family. He becomes convinced that bad things only ever happen to him, but then his parents, his brother and his sister all suffer terrible days of their own. Family comedy based on Judith Viorst's series of children's books, starring Ed Oxenbould, Steve Carell and Jennifer Garner.
8.00 **Robot Wars.** Robots Expulsion, Coyote, Thor, Magnetar, Hobbogoblin and Push to Exit battle it out for a place in the grand final. Among the players controlling the machines are self-taught engineer Ellis, and a team of schoolchildren determined to prove lack of experience is not a problem. Presented by Dara Ó Briain and Angela Scanlon.
9.00 **Expedition Volcano.** Part one of two. Documentary following scientists studying some of the world's most dangerous active volcanoes in the Congo. The series begins by exploring Nyiragongo, which has erupted twice in the last 50 years, most recently in 2002, when it devastated the nearby city of Goma. However, it lies in a region troubled by war and humanitarian crises, which has made study of the volcano difficult.
10.00 **Snowfall.** Lucia finds it hard to break away from her family, Teddy tries to cover Alejandro's tracks, and Franklin faces new threats. Guest starring Billy Boyd (The Lord of the Rings).
10.40 **Film: John Carter.** (2012) Fantasy adventure, with Taylor Kitsch and Lynn Collins.
12.40 Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **1.45** Holby City. (R) **2.40** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knocker Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission: Empowering. (R) **7.05** Oshodi. (R) **7.10** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Ben 10. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Make It Pop. (R) **9.00** Scrambled!: Wshfart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Australian Wilderness with Ray Mears. (R) **10.00** Peston on Sunday. **11.00** Save Money: Good Food. (R) **11.30** Tipping Point. (R) **12.30** ITV News: Weather. **12.45** The X Factor: The Semi Finals. (R) **2.20** Midsummer Murders. (R) **4.10** Les Dawson Forever.
6.05 **Regional Programme:** Weather.
6.15 **ITV News:** Weather.
6.30 **The Chase: Celebrity Special.** Patrick Baladi, Vicky Williamson, John Craven and Kevin Eldon work as a team to secure a cash prize for charity. Presented by Bradley Walsh. Last in the series.
7.30 **The X Factor: The Semi Finals.** Dermot O'Leary hosts as the remaining contestants take to the stage, hoping to make it into the grand final, with judges Louis Walsh, Nicole Scherzinger, Simon Cowell and Sharon Osbourne battling it out to keep their acts in the show. This year Louis has the Boys, Nicole the Overs, Simon the Groups and Sharon the Girls.
9.00 **I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!** Ant and Dec give viewers at home a chance to catch up with the superstar castaways as they prepare to enter their second week in the jungle. Plus, the competition steps up a gear as the celebrities face this year's live Bush Tucker Trial. In 2016, the contestants took part in the "Hungry Games" as part of the live trial, with Adam Thomas, Carol Vorderman, Danny Baker, Jordan Banjo, Ola Jordan and Wayne Bridge emerging victorious.
10.30 **ITV News:** Weather.
10.45 **Peston on Sunday.** Political magazine, presented by Robert Peston and Alegria Stratton. Last in the series. (R)
11.45 **Road Rage Britain: Caught on Camera.** (R)
12.45 Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

7.55 Frasier. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Sunday Brunch. **12.00** Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Live Build-Up. A look ahead to today's Grand Prix. **12.35** Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Live. The Abu Dhabi Grand Prix (Start-time 1.00pm). **3.10** Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Live Reaction. In-depth analysis of this afternoon's race. **4.35** Speed with Guy Martin: F1 Challenge. (R) **5.35** Channel 4 News.
6.05 **Film: Men in Black 3.** (2012) An alien criminal escapes from a prison on the moon and goes back in time on a mission of revenge, changing the course of history. Agent J of the top-secret Earth defence organisation follows him back to 1969, and joins forces with a younger version of his mentor Agent K to set things right. Sci-fi comedy sequel, starring Will Smith, Josh Brolin and Tommy Lee Jones. Edited for language and violence.
8.00 **Coastal Railways with Julie Walters.** New series. The actress travels around the UK coast by train, beginning by boarding the famous Jacobite steam train for a trip along Scotland's West Highland Railway, famously featured in the Harry Potter movies. Along the way, Julie learns about herring gutting and blowing up railway lines, and meets a traditional Scottish storyteller on the Isle of Skye.
9.00 **Guy Martin vs the Robocar.** The presenter explores the world of automated self-driving vehicles, attempting to build one of his own in his shed. He takes a trip to Budapest for a ride in a completely autonomous vehicle, which is being tested on public roads for the first time. Finally, he heads to Silverstone, to take on a computer-controlled car in a race.
10.00 **Film: RoboCop.** (2014) A critically injured police officer is rebuilt as a crime-fighting cyborg, but struggles to retain free will. Sci-fi thriller remake, with Joel Kinnaman and Gary Oldman.
12.10 **Film: Good Kill.** (2014) Drama, starring Ethan Hawke. **2.00** The Supertet. A cocker spaniel has a bulging disc in its spine. (R) **3.00** Trump: An American Dream. (R) **3.55** Location, Location. (R) **4.50** Gillette World Sport. **5.15** KOTV Boxing Weekly. **5.45** Kirstie's Fill Your House for Free. (R) **5.55** Kevin Can Wait.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Little Princess. **6.10** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.20** Poppy Cat. (R) **6.35** Wissper. (R) **6.40** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.45** Milkshake! Bopping About. (R) **6.50** Simon. (R) **6.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.00** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.15** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.25** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.35** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.50** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.15** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.35** Nella the Princess Knight. (R) **8.50** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.20** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.35** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.45** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.20** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.10** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **11.40** Film: A Christmas Tail. (2012) **1.20** Film: Winter Wedding. (2017) Premiere. Romantic drama, starring Andrea Bowen. **3.10** Film: A Christmas to Remember. (2016) Concluded. **4.55** Film: Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest. (2006) Concluded.
7.55 **5 News Weekend.**
8.00 **Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights.** Mark Durden-Smith and David Flatman present action from the ninth round of matches, including Newcastle Falcons v Gloucester at Kingston Park, Sale Sharks v Northampton Saints at the AJ Bell Stadium and Leicester Tigers v Worcester Warriors at Welford Road.
9.00 **Film: Fury.** (2014) An American tank crew undertakes a final dangerous mission behind enemy lines in the last months of the Second World War. Drama, starring Brad Pitt and Shia LaBeouf.
10.00 **5 News Update.**
10.05 **Film: Fury.** (2014) Concluded.
11.35 **Film: Flight of the Phoenix.** (2004) A plane crashes in the desert and the survivors plan to return to civilisation by building a new aircraft from the wreckage. Adventure, starring Dennis Quaid and Tyrese Gibson.
1.40 SuperCasino. **3.10** Chris Tarrant: Extreme Railway Journeys. (R) **4.00** My Mum's Hotter Than Me! (R) **4.50** Great Artists. (R) **5.20** Wildlife SOS. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Great Continental Railway Journeys **7.30** University Challenge **8.00** Nigel Kennedy at the BBC **9.00** Shark 10.00 Walrus: Two Tonne Tusker – Natural World **11.00** Naples 44: A Wartime Diary **12.20** Nigel Kennedy at the BBC **1.20** Shark 2.20 Walrus: Two Tonne Tusker – Natural World **3.20** Close
ITV2
12.30 Take Me Out **2.00** You've Been Framed and Famous! **3.05** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **4.55** Film: Despicable Me (2010) **5.05** FYI Daily **5.10** Film: Despicable Me (2010) **6.00** Film: Evan Almighty (2007) **7.00** FYI Daily **7.05** Film: Evan Almighty (2007) **8.05** Film: Wrath of the Titans (2012) **8.55** FYI Daily **9.10** Film: Wrath of the Titans (2012) **10.00** Family Guy **10.30** I'm a Celebrity: Extra Camp **11.30** Family Guy **12.30** American Dad! **1.30** Release the Hounds **2.25** Teleshopping **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
12.05 Wycliffe **1.15** Film: Columbo: How to Dial a Murder (1978) **2.50** Lewis **4.55** Agatha Christie's Marple **7.00** Housewife, 49 **9.00** Endeavour **11.05** The Blonde Bombshell **1.15** Heartbeat **2.05** The Knock **3.55** Wycliffe **4.50** Judge Judy **5.30** ITV3 Nightscreen
ITV4
11.40 The Darts Show **12.45** Live Darts: Players Championship Finals. Coverage of the quarter-finals from Butlins Minehead. **5.00** Pawn Stars **6.00** River Monsters **7.00** Live Darts: Players Championship Finals. Coverage of the semi-finals and final at Butlins Minehead. **11.00** Film: Crank (2006) **12.00** FYI Daily **12.05** Film: Crank (2006) **12.45** The Sweeney **1.45** The Avengers **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping
E4
11.00 Made in Chelsea **12.00** Don't Tell the Bride **1.00** Film: Diary of a Wimpy Kid (2010) **2.55** RudeTube (ish) Tube Shorts **3.00** The Goldbergs **4.00** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** Film: Ghostbusters II (1989)
10.05 The Big Bang Theory: Who You Gonna Call? **11.05** Gogglebox **12.10** Rude Tube **1.15** First Dates **2.20** Gogglebox **3.15** Rude Tube **3.40** Hollyoaks
Film4
11.00 Thunderbirds (2004) **12.50** The Riot Club Interview Special **1.00** The Phantom (1996) **3.00** Fletch (1985) **5.05** The Muppet Christmas Carol (1992) **6.45** Miracle on 34th Street (1994) **9.00** Cowboys & Aliens (2011) **11.20** The Lincoln Lawyer (2011)

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
A Perfect Christmas, Channel 5, 3.45pm
 An advertising executive walks past a display mannequin in a department store window every day. When she suffers a bad fall outside the shop, the dummy comes to life to help her. He turns out to be everything she has always wanted in a man – but she soon realises her dream does not bring her happiness. Festive fantasy, starring Claire Coffee and Ryan McPartlin. (2012)

TUESDAY
The Christmas Switch, Channel 5, 2pm
 A hustler is asked to magically swap bodies with a dying man at Christmas in return for either a million dollars or having all his past sins forgiven. He chooses the money, but as he watches the other man using his body to do good deeds, he begins to reconsider what is important in his life. Fantasy, starring Brian Krause, Cedric Smith and Natasha Henstridge. (2014)



Total Recall, Friday, ITV, 11.15pm

WEDNESDAY
A Bride for Christmas, Channel 5, 11.45am
 A woman swears off serious relationships after breaking off her third failed engagement, only to run into a man who seems perfect for her a month before Christmas. However, she does not realise he has made a bet with his friends that he can persuade a woman to marry him before the holiday begins. Romantic drama, with Arielle Kebbel. (2012)

THURSDAY
Seventh Son, Channel 5, 9pm
 Premiere. A professional monster hunter hires a young apprentice to help him track down an evil queen. Fantasy adventure, starring Ben Barnes and Jeff Bridges. (2014)

FRIDAY
Total Recall, ITV, 11.15pm
 A construction worker pays to have fake memories of a dream holiday implanted into his brain, but discovers his mind has already been tampered with – apparently to erase his true identity as a secret agent from a colony on Mars. Paul Verhoeven's sci-fi thriller, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, Rachel Ticotin and Michael Ironside. (1990)

Paul looks to serve up a tasty treat in new series

Say what you like about the latest Bake Off – and there are those of us who still feel nostalgic for the BBC days despite having great respect for Channel 4's handling of the series – but the latest run was an unmitigated success.

At 11 million viewers, the final was watched by the channel's biggest audience in 32 years (the 1985 drama A Woman of Substance pipped it to the post), and the second-biggest ever in Channel 4 history. It was still behind the Beeb's 2016 final, which drew in 14.8 million, but let's not split macarons here – after all, Prue Leith did give away the winner 12 hours before transmission.

Anyway, the anchor which enabled the new cast – judge Leith, and hosts Sandi Toksvig and Noel Fielding – to merge almost seamlessly into the old format was Paul Hollywood, the blue-eyed baking pro who's been with the show since series one. He's become notorious for his strict

judging style as well as the occasional praise he doles out to those (very few) deserving bakers – the "Hollywood Handshake" has become serious currency in Bake Off circles.

The fact is, Hollywood knows his stuff. He began working at a bakery – his father's – as a teenager, and went on to work as head baker at a number of prestigious hotels and restaurants throughout the UK and in Cyprus. This was all before he found fame. During this time, he's learned a thing or two about baking.

In this new series, he prepares to impart some of that knowledge – as well as, giving this series a rather unique twist, integrating some previously unseen footage from the Bake Off tent and even the auditions phase. This means it's a must for any fans of the series, who are hungry for more helpings before the next series comes along.

Noel and Sandi crop up, too, offering their inimitable insights,

while Prue is also on hand to keep Paul in line. Think of it as a reunion, then – especially when previous contestants Val and Selasi turn up to challenge Paul to bake a pistachio and rose petal roulade. Which he does, of course, with customary panache.

Other recipes – this is a baking show, after all – include Paul's favourite pizza recipe: a courgette, lemon and thyme-topped bake, an unusual combination for which he gives credit to Venice.

He also gets out and about, visiting the famous motor racing track Silverstone where he makes a childhood-favourite burger recipe for a barbecue held in the paddock, before heading back to the Bake Off tent with Prue, where he bakes a madeira celebration cake. He hands over the decoration of this particular confection to Noel and Sandi, who oblige with a "nude" meringue finish. Expect some risqué puns about that, then.



Paul Hollywood: A Baker's Life, Monday, Channel 4, 8pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Supershoppers Channel 4, 8.30pm
 New series. The consumer advice show returns with Anna Richardson joined by new co-presenter Sabrina Grant to provide the lowdown on favourite brands and retailers, as well as tips on how to get the best deals. In the first edition Anna and Sabrina look at supermarkets' own ranges and investigate whether cheaper value-range products might be identical to pricier standard own-label lines. Plus, they offer advice on how to buy cheaper car insurance, and there is a face-off between cheap and expensive beauty wipes.

TUESDAY
MOTD Live BBC2, 6.55pm
 Following their World Cup Qualifier against Bosnia on Friday, England Women welcome Kazakhstan to Colchester United's Weston Homes Community Stadium. One player who can't wait for the Group One game is England's Essex-born defender Casey Stoney. 'I'm particularly looking forward to playing in Colchester', the Liverpool star says. 'I come from Basildon so it's great to have a game in my home county.' This is the first time the two nations have met, and Mo Marley's Lionesses will be expected to

put on a good showing tonight and secure a comfortable victory, similar to that of the 6-0 thrashing of Russia in September. Nikita Parris, Jodie Taylor, Jordan Nobbs, Lucy Bronze and Toni Duggan (two) were all on target that evening in Tranmere.

WEDNESDAY
The Channel: The World's Busiest Waterway Channel 4, 9pm
 More than 400 ships pass through the 21-mile-wide Dover Strait every day, making it, as the title of this new series suggests, the busiest waterway in the world. But the English Channel is also significant for the way it defines Britain's border with Europe – and in the wake of Brexit, these are uncertain times for the people who live and work on the waters. To offer a further insight into the life of the waterway, cameras go inside the Channel Tunnel, on board ferries and freighters and into the hidden nerve centres to see what it takes to keep the system moving. In the first episode, ferry captain Mark deals with high winds and drunk

passengers, while swimmer Naomi attempts to navigate her way through some challenging conditions.

THURSDAY
Great Canal Journeys Channel 4, 8pm
 They may be in their 80s, but there's no stopping Timothy West and Prunella Scales. They seem to have only just got back from their latest batch of jaunts, and here they are, off again on a two-part adventure which begins in north west Portugal. They're getting up close and personal with the dramatic local landscape while travelling down the Rio Douro via an old trade route. En route the couple will stop off at the local vineyards, often perched on the nearby hilltops. It's a trip unlike any they've taken before, and includes the deepest lock in Europe and



Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast, Friday, Channel 4, 8pm

various sites of ancient historical importance. But there's a little taste of home too in the form of a traditional English gentlemen's club in Porto before a chance to follow in the footsteps of a Yorkshire-born entrepreneur.

FRIDAY
Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast Channel 4, 8pm
 Hosts Jamie Oliver and Jimmy Doherty are joined by Joanna Lumley in their cafe at the end of Southend Pier, and this time the menu is exclusively vegetarian, as the Ab Fab actress cooks the King of Malaysia's favourite dish, bringing back to life the tastes and smells of her childhood. Jamie prepares a spectacular M'hanncha – a spiral of filo pastry stuffed with pearl barley and butternut squash and the boys take to the road to champion British fava beans – which could help both the nation's farmers and its diet.

Eight Days That Made Rome: The Downfall of Nero Channel 5, 9pm
 Bettany Hughes focuses on events leading up to and after 9th June 68AD, when Emperor Nero took his life, examining how it triggered the eventual decline of the Roman Empire.

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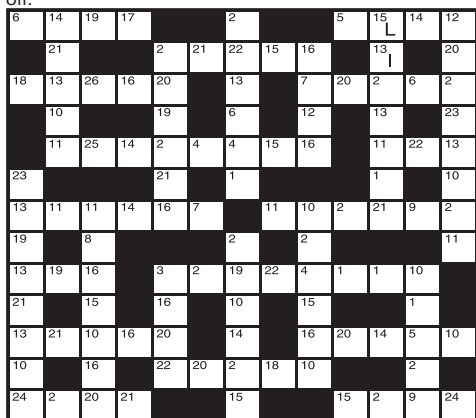
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No.457

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
E	H	S	O	D	I	Y	C	Z	F	P	T	B
A	R	J	K	M	G	U	W	X	Q	L	N	V

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

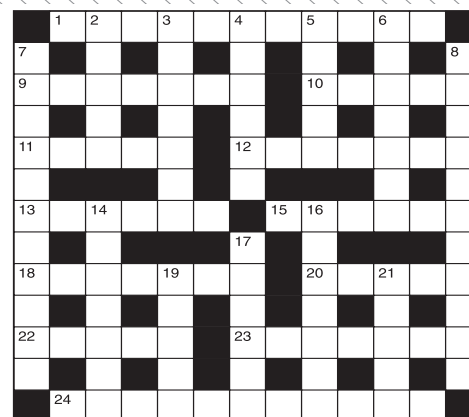
Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. The old boy with the only perfume going out of date (11)
9. Put on one's own for not being punctual? (7)
10. Material from the French island (5)
11. A language of South India (5)
12. He has time to fill in his job (7)
13. Threaten to finish one politician (6)
15. Does he record runs in twenties? (6)
18. Wishing success before tomorrow? (4,3)
20. Song in really rich style (5)
22. Stale in the smallest degree (5)
23. Lie is wrong, certainly, but gives restful ease (7)
24. Zodiacal sign not revealed to office workers (11)

Down

2. Colour for brother to possess (5)
3. Enthusiastic applause for egg production? (7)
4. Corrects me on rising to conclusions (6)
5. Officer doesn't need the Spanish punctuation mark (5)
6. Retains more offensive order (7)
7. The bird presumably had something to sing about in the morning (11)
8. Insect on trial in international sport (4,7)
14. Irreligious, but in favour of temple (7)
16. He surfaces after work, of course (7)
17. Organ permitted to find loophole (6)
19. Put off animals from going inland eternally (5)
21. Stir or get up to exercise (5)



Quick Clues:

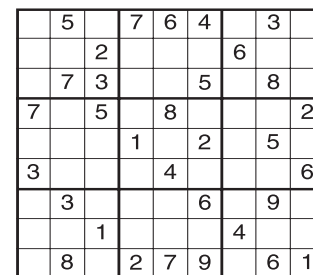
Across

1. Besides (11)
9. Horseman's iron (7)
10. Granted (5)
11. Anoint (5)
12. Canadian province (7)
13. Flippancy (6)
15. Slumbering (6)
18. Excess (7)
20. Characteristic (5)
22. Decree (5)
23. Exhilaration (7)
24. Enterprise (11)

Down

2. Combine (5)
3. Flood (7)
4. Set at work (6)
5. Strength (5)
6. Daydream (7)
7. Permanent (11)
8. Very inefficient (11)
14. Rendering (7)
16. Relapse (3-4)
17. Acquiesce (6)
19. Supple (5)
21. Foreign (5)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

7	3	5	4	9	1	8	6	2
6	4	9	8	2	7	5	3	1
1	8	2	5	6	3	4	7	9
3	5	6	9	8	2	7	1	4
9	2	7	6	1	4	3	5	8
4	1	8	3	7	5	2	9	6
5	7	1	2	4	9	6	8	3
8	9	4	7	3	6	1	2	5
2	6	3	1	5	8	9	4	7

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
 CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Arranger; 5 Cool; 9 Purr; 10 Strident; 11 Right; 12 Replace; 13 Temperament; 18 Apparent; 19 Goal; 20 Protege; 21 David; 22 Rake; 23 Standing.
 Down: 2 Routine; 3 Airship; 4 Entertainment; 6 Operate; 7 Letters; 8 Simple; 13 Trapper; 14 Mapbook; 15 Earned; 16 Niggard; 17 Station.
 QUICK - Across: 1 Sanctify; 5 Acid; 9 Bye; 10 Accident; 11 Smart; 12 Talents; 13 Play upon words; 18 Interest; 19 Thin; 20 Bondage; 21 Solid; 22 Elan; 23 Astonish.
 Down: 2 Abysmal; 3 Clearly; 4 Facetiousness; 6 Cleaner; 7 Detests; 8 Pillow; 13 Pliable; 14 Antenna; 15 Uproar; 16 Outworn; 17 Detties.

Quiz

1. Which disorder is also called word blindness?
2. What is a dunlin?
3. In which children's TV series would you find Alderney and Tobermory?
4. Which singer was born Declan McManus?
5. Which US President was assassinated in Buffalo?
6. To which family does the lovebird belong?
7. Which Vicar of Dibley star posed nude for Esquire magazine?
8. Which art-form was regulated in the US by the Hays Office?
9. Of what is Ceres the largest known example?
10. According to Arthurian legend, who was Sir Galahad's father?

Last week's solutions:

- Quiz: 1 Benjamin Franklin; 2 Luxembourg; 3 J Edgar Hoover; 4 Polish; 5 Propaganda; 6 Aaron; 7 Muskrat; 8 One; 9 California; 10 George Eliot.

Niner: METAPHORS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

34564
14925
5789428

gives a French author,
gives a French sculptor,
gives a French painter.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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Friends reunited for special birthday

WE have been friends since middle school, sharing the joys and tribulations of teenage years and later weddings and children.

And now we were all sharing a special birthday! For a few years now we had abandoned present buying for birthdays and Christmas and just arranged a meal or break away. And this weekend it was a special one.

We were staying at the five-star St David's Hotel and Spa which has a prominent position on Cardiff Bay's waterfront and it's a stone's throw from the city centre. The hotel is striking with its glass fronted structure on the edge of the bay.

Across the Severn Estuary we could see where we planned to spend our evening at Michelin-starred Restaurant James Sommerin in Penarth.

The restaurant is in a prime position on the seafront with contemporary and chic decor, including the use of Welsh slate, and crisp white table covers.

PRIVATE

There is also a private dining room and Chef's table. There is a huge window from the main restaurant to the kitchen, where you watch the chefs at work.

In a short amount of time James has amassed an array of accolades and just two days after our visit the restaurant won four Rosettes at The AA Hospitality Awards 2017.

Proud of his Welsh heritage James, who runs the restaurant with his wife Louise, uses the finest ingredients, locally sourced where possible. The food was exquisite.

We went for the six-course testing menu including matching wine. The options for the evening were the six courses, nine courses and also the Surprise Menu when you leave your dining experience in James' hands. It is then a bespoke menu.

Striking and imposing – Cardiff Bay's waterfront



Each course was expertly presented and a lovely touch was that the chefs including the man himself came to our table to run through the dishes.

The six courses started with beetroot, feta and pine-nut; followed by venison with carrot, tarragon and mushroom and then langoustine with samphire and spices; guinea fowl with sweetcorn, truffle and potato. For dessert there was pear with cinnamon, flap-jack and hazelnut and apple with puff pastry, caramel and vanilla.

After the meal, it was back to our hotel which is set on Cardiff Bay's waterfront.

Restaurant has panoramic views across the bay



Our rooms with balconies had views across the estuary and it was wonderful to watch the boats and yachts sailing by.

Relaxation was certainly the name of the weekend with Marina Spa being most inviting with relaxation pools, hydrotherapy multi jet marine pools, a sauna, gym, treatment rooms and a relaxation suite, whilst enjoying the beautiful views overlooking Cardiff Bay.

The hotel restaurant is beautiful and airy with lovely neutral and teal shades and floor-to-floor windows with panoramic views across the bay.

The Admiral St David draws inspiration from the eclectic food culture and bold flavours of Australasia and Asia-Pacific, while looking closer to home for the best of seasonal Welsh produce.

After breakfast at the Admiral we wandered around Cardiff Bay which used to be known as Tiger Bay. It has been transformed with the Giant Wheel, restaurants and bars and the Senedd – home to the Welsh Government. Next door is the Wales Millennium Centre. There is also the Norwegian Church which Roald Dahl had attended as a child and is now Cafe Norsk.

LISA BAILEY

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

THE NEW WELLINGTON SCOOPS STOURBRIDGE CHRONICLE PUB OF THE YEAR AWARD

Recently the Stourbridge Chronicle ran the Pub Of The Year Competition. The voting process was down to the readers where they had to vote for their favourite pub.

After many entries the winner this year was The New Wellington which is managed by Alex Colbourne. The pub/restaurant has gone from strength to strength since it opened its doors to the general public early this year.

Alex said 'We are very proud of this award and we try to provide our customers old and new with a nice environment as we have recently taken over The New Wellington and thrive on providing the best food and service possible.

The New Wellington offers Buffet style breakfasts served daily from 8am until 11am then swapping to Carvery which children eat free Monday-Saturday 3pm until 6pm. The Sunday carvery is extremely popular and booking is recommended. You will find a good range of entertainment at



the Wellington starting on Mondays where you can find a quiz night with prizes to be won followed by a soul and motown night every Thursday, Karaoke Fridays to a live band on Saturdays.

Alex and some of her team were presented with the Award last week by the Stourbridge Chronicle entertainment representative Sarah Childs.

The New Wellington is located at 383 Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill – So get yourselves down to the Stourbridge Chronicle Pub Of The Year and you won't be disappointed.

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Over the last 60 years, the family-run Worcester Carsales has seen three generations of the Grieveson family enjoy working for the firm, and to date, Mr Grieveson's grandchildren work within the group.

Happy staff should mean contented customers, and the fact that T Wall Ford has always enjoyed high levels of repeat business is evidence of this. This desirable situation is due to its customers being provided with exceptional levels of service across all departments, from new and used car sales through to parts and aftersales.

Employees are highly valued and encouraged to develop their careers through the company. They are able to move up through the ranks if they wish, and are provided with all the skills and knowledge to do so. So that the team are able to achieve great job satisfaction and excel in the delivery of customer care, considerable importance is placed into the value of staff training.

As a result, numerous members of the team remain with Worcester Carsales and T Wall Ford for many years, which is



T Wall has always enjoyed repeat business



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extremely refreshing to note in an industry usually known for fast staff turnover. It also helps considerably when it comes to the consistency of customer care.

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T Wall Ford's fully-accredited Motability Specialists are Nigel Sydenham and Stefan Reed. Popular with their customers, they both take time to discover the needs of all people who gain their vehicles through the excellent Motability scheme.

Managing Director, Stuart Grieveson said: "We have a strong workforce with an excellent

work ethic. Our dealership has proved successful through everyone working as a team, so that each and every customer gains the best possible service on each and every occasion. We would like to thank our many customers for their incredible loyalty and never forget that they have a choice."

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The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

Probably best car Vauxhall makes

By Ian Donaldson

Vauxhall can't have heard about the demise of diesel; the new range topping Insignia Country Tourer comes with nothing else.

In fact, there isn't even a choice of engine until a second one arrives in a few weeks. And that's a diesel too.

Of course, Vauxhall knows diesels are going to be around for years and the overhyped stories that diesel is in its death throws are simply nonsense.

Which is just as well if you enjoy your driving, for the newcomer is probably the best car Vauxhall currently makes.

Ability

For a £1,355 premium over the normal Sport Tourer you gain four-wheel drive in the most expensive version, while all of them have a gently raised ride height (+20mm) and the macho black plastic cladding and silver skid plates that these days signifies a car with the ability to handle a slippery forest track.

The result is a big car, more than five metres long, that socks it to the likes of Audi's Allroad and the VW Passat Alltrack but for thousands less, starting the three car range at £25,635.

All of them share a 168bhp 2.0 litre turbo diesel engine and the ability to touch 135mph and hit 62mph in around nine seconds while managing better than 43mpg in the official test. A 210 horsepower diesel arrives shortly and automatic gears are already an option in a Country Tourer in front-drive form. Order the 4x4 (£27,235) and you'll have a car that is mostly front wheel drive most of the time but can switch power to the back wheels in an instant when slip is detected.

Beneath the new body cladding sits a car



Standard kit includes a fine satellite navigation system



This car has plenty of space for passengers in the rear

with enough space in the rear seat to act a stand-in limo and a boot that varies from generous (560 litres) with the seat back upright to vast (1,665 litres) with it folded down.

Lack of room will never be a problem here. Nor will the fittings and fixtures that come with a car Vauxhall perches at the pinnacle of the Insignia range.

As befits the poshest model there are a

host of standard features, from a tailgate that opens with a well aimed kicking motion under the rear bumper to roof rails that can cope with loads up to 100kg.

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This version of the Insignia goes well beyond its specification and turns into an enjoyable ride

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1

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3

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4

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5 Business & Farming

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6 Property

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8 Motoring

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Department for Transport
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
The Secretary of State gives notice of the proposal to make an Order under section 247 of the above Act to authorise the stopping up of a part-width of Mere Road, a former access into the Adult Training Centre, at Dudley in the Metropolitan Borough of Dudley. If made, the Order would authorise the stopping up only to enable development as permitted by Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council under reference P16/1844.
Copies of the draft Order and relevant plan will be available for inspection during normal opening hours at Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Council House, Priory Road, Dudley DY1 1HF in the 28 days commencing on 24 November 2017, and may be obtained, free of charge, from the address stated below quoting NATTRAN/WM/S247/3071.
Any person may object to the making of the proposed order by stating their reasons in writing to the Secretary of State at nationalcaseworker@dft.gsi.gov.uk or National Transport Casework Team, Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7AR, quoting the above reference. Objections should be received by midnight on 22 December 2017. Any person submitting any correspondence is advised that your personal data and correspondence will be passed to the applicant/agent to be considered. If you do not wish your personal data to be forwarded, please state your reasons when submitting your correspondence.
G Patrick, Casework Manager

10 Personals

Personal
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9 Local Information

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(remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

MURIEL DORIS WHEELER (Deceased)
Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the aforementioned deceased, late of 50 Castle Grove Oldswinford Stourbridge West Midlands DY8 2HH, who died on 30/09/2017, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned Solicitors on or before 26/01/2018, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.
PAINTERS SOLICITORS
29 Church Street Kidderminster Worcestershire DY10 2AU TS160158
WILLIAM GEORGE SHARRATT (Deceased)
Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the aforementioned deceased, late of 9 Hem Road Brierley Hill West Midlands DY5 2PN, who died on 31/07/2017, are required to send particulars thereof in writing to the undersigned Solicitors on or before 26/01/2018, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests of which they have had notice.
TALBOTS LAW LIMITED
Morgan House 25-27 Hagley Road Stourbridge DY8 1QH TS16060



Chris as Walsall manager in 1995, after the signing of Derek Mountfield



Nicholl heads the ball towards goal during one of his 210 appearances for Aston Villa



A picture captures the impact as Jeff Astle heads the ball



Playing for Villa in the 1970s seen with the League Cup trophy



Chris in his later years, still a favourite with the crowds at the Saddlers

Ex-Walsall boss Chris tells of memory fears

FORMER Walsall manager and Villa captain Chris Nicholl has said he no longer remembers where he lives – due to brain damage caused by years of heading footballs.

The 71-year-old, who still lives in the West Midlands, has said his condition is continuing to get worse. The Northern Ireland international won two League Cups with Villa in the 1970s, famously netting a long-range stunner in the 1977 final against Everton.

After he retired from playing, Nicholl led Walsall to promotion from Division Three in 1995 during a three-year stint as manager.

He spoke to former England striker Alan Shearer as part of a BBC documentary investigating links between dementia and heading footballs.

Nicholl said: "I am brain-damaged from heading footballs.

"My memory is in trouble. Everyone forgets regular things, where your keys are.

"But when you forget where you live, that's different.

"I've had that for the last four or five years, it is definitely getting worse. It bothers me."

Degenerative

Nicholl is among a string of former pros – including Albion legend Jeff Astle – to have been struck down after their playing days have ended.

Astle died in 2002 aged just 59 from chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a degenerative brain disease caused by heading footballs.

His family have been campaigning for years to get the Football Association and FIFA to conduct research into heading.

Shearer, who made his top-flight debut as a teenager under Nicholl at Southampton, said: "It was tough to see the way Chris is now, because he gave me my debut.

"He had me heading 100 or 150 balls a day to improve, but he did it for the right reasons."

The BBC documentary shows current Aston Villa captain John Terry admitting he encourages his 11-year-old daughter Summer Rose to head the ball, even though experts fear girls are at the greatest risk of concussion.

Shearer, 47, had scans and tests to examine how heading the ball affected him, amid fears he has sustained long-term damage.

The results were revealed on the show, Alan Shearer,



Alan Shearer, who fears he may be susceptible to dementia after heading the ball throughout his footballing career

SPORTING FEATURE

By David Cosgrove

Dementia, Football and Me, which was first shown on BBC1 on Sunday, November 12 at 10.30pm and is available on the BBC iPlayer.

The Match of the Day pundit said: "Nowhere near enough research has been done. The authorities have been very reluctant to find out any answers.

"They have swept it under the carpet, which is not good enough.

"Football must look after old players with dementia and put an end to this sense that, once you are done playing, you can be put on the scrapheap.

"It's a tough game, it's a brilliant game, but we have to make sure it's not a killer game."

Experts suspected heading footballs may cause brain damage and dementia for decades but a firm link was not made until the inquest into Astle's death.

A coroner found he died from a form of dementia called CTE, known as boxer's brain, caused by heading footballs.

In the 15 years since, neither the Football Association nor international body FIFA have funded any meaningful research into the dangers of heading footballs.

FA medical director Charlotte Cowie accepted it had avoided the issue in the past but said: "I feel we like are running towards this problem at the moment."

She said the FA were looking to study former professional footballers to get results as quickly as possible, and it could ban children from heading the ball if early evidence showed it damaged the brain.

Knockout night with boxing champ Fury

BOXING fans can enjoy a knockout night as Tyson Fury makes his debut appearance in Wolverhampton for an audience with fans.

The 'Turkey & Tinsel with Tyson' takes place on December 13 at the Ramada Park Hall Hotel. The former unified heavyweight champion of the world will share his personal story – live and unscripted on stage, interviewed by Gareth A Davis.

He will answer questions from the audience, with the festive evening also featuring a mix of top entertainment, red carpet drinks reception, memorabilia auction and Christmas meal.

Tickets start at £55, rising to £85 for a silver package and £150 for gold, which includes a picture with Fury. For the full VIP experience at £200 guests can also enjoy a VIP meet and greet, a prime table location and a signed glove.

Fundraising will be in aid of Foundation DB set up by Wolves captain Danny Bath. Tickets are being sold at www.tysonfury.eventbrite.co.uk

Pitching in for work on new 3G surface

A NEW 3G pitch is to be launched at Dudley's Dell Stadium. The modern playing surface will replace the existing 18-year-old artificial grass pitch.

The work, part of Dudley council's playing pitch strategy, began on Monday and should take around 12 weeks to complete. The project was developed in partnership with Sport England and the Football Association.

The £660,000 cost will be made up of £550,000 funding through The FA, The Football Foundation and £110,000 from Dudley Council.

Existing users of the facility have been temporarily relocated to other sites in the borough and the Saturday morning ParkRun has been suspended for the duration of the works.

This investment is in addition to the council's commitment to invest £22m in the wider leisure service which includes plans for a new leisure centre in Dudley, as well as refurbishing and modernising the existing leisure centres in Halesowen and Stourbridge. Booking enquiries should be made to Steve Gay, area manager, at steve.gay@dudley.gov.uk

Greats turn out for former team-mate

MIDLAND footballing greats came together to help raise funds for former Albion and Villa goalkeeper Derek Dudley, who is suffering from a terminal illness. The 47-year-old contracted a serious liver condition and it was his final wish to bring former friends from the footballing world together for a final game. It was staged on Sunday at Sutton Coldfield Town FC's home ground where a number of former players were watched by a large crowd.

Dudley, who spent four years at Villa, lives in Rugeley with his wife Helen and children Daniel, 13, and Elizabeth, 11.

His bucket list includes having a nice meal with his children and getting the 'lads' together for one last game.

He was joined by members of Villa's 1982 European Cup winning side including Peter Withe, Tony Morley and Gordon Cowans as well former Baggies team-mates including Daryl Burgess and Darren Bradley.

When his football career ended, Derek became a teacher, including a spell at The Brades Lodge school in Tividale.



Glassboys fail to make up ground

Shaw Lane 3 Stourbridge 1
STOURBRIDGE had a torrid time at Shaw Lane as their attempts to gain ground on their fellow Evo-Stik Premier promotion chasers came to nothing.

Glassboys were without the suspended Stuart Pierpoint and Aaron Forde and things were always going to be difficult against the managerless South Yorkshire side.

Things could have possibly been different had the home side been reduced to 10 men after Ryan Qualter made contact with Kyle Perry's face in an off-the-ball incident on 10 minutes.

But Qualter escaped with a yellow and things got worse for Stourbridge 10 minutes later when Paul McCone brought down Chib Chilaka in the penalty area and Spencer Harris converted the penalty.

The Glassboys' defence could do little about Harris's strike for his second goal on 25 minutes, a rasping drive beyond goalkeeper Matt Gould.

Alex Byrne almost made it three just before half-time, but saw his shot go just over the bar. Luke Shearer had Stourbridge's first shot of the game just after the break, but Jon Stewart in the Shaw Lane goal saved well.

On 56 minutes it was three as Byrne was given time and space on the edge of the Stourbridge box to deliver a cross on to the head of unmarked Chilaka who easily scored.

There was then a 15-minute delay to find a replacement assistant referee.

This seemed to do Stourbridge good as shortly after Luke Benbow got a goal back with an excellent volley, continuing his good form since returning to Amblecote.

Yeltz head for point with debutant's goal

Halesowen Town 1 Marine 1
MIDFIELDER Ivor Lawton marked his full Halesowen debut with a late equaliser to earn the Yeltz a vital point against relegation rivals Marine.

And boss John Hill said there will be more to come from the former Coventry City midfielder.

"He is short of match fitness and we've worked him hard in training this week," Hill said. "But the one thing for sure is that Ivor will get fitter and stronger."

Halesowen were guilty of missing a string of first-half chances, while visiting skipper Dany Mitchley was twice denied by Yeltz keeper Dan Platt.

After an impressive opening 45 minutes, Yeltz struggled after the break and fell behind on 69 minutes when James Murray sent a delightful chip over the head of Platt from the edge of the area.

The goal spurred Hill's side on in search of an equaliser and it came six minutes from the end. Udoh saw his shot deflected past the post and Lawson headed home from the resulting corner.

Spaniard in the works for title bout

RICKY Summers has vowed to take out his frustration on new opponent Romero Gonzalo this weekend.

The Tipton light heavyweight was set to face Coventry's Joe Sherriff for the vacant Midlands Area Light Heavyweight Title on Saturday but illness has forced his opponent out and Summers will now face Spanish opposition at the top of BCB Promotions' show at the Imperial Banqueting Suite, Bilston.

The 30 year-old knows patience is a virtue after waiting for his chance to battle Frank Buglioni

for the British Title last time out. That fight was postponed for a number of months after Buglioni, who went on to claim a points victory, suffered a cut in sparring.

Summers though, frustrated by Sherriff's late pull out, is ready to put in a career-best performance against Gonzalo next weekend.

"The only word to sum it up is frustration," he explained. "I'm ready to take my frustrations out on him and blow him out the water."

Meanwhile Rowley Regis' Jason Welborn lines up for his 28th bout having seen his year stalled

since a one-sided points victory over the unbeaten Marcus Morrison live on Sky in March.

Success at Morrison's expense earned him the WBC International Silver middleweight title and he's also been a Midlands champion at two weights. Two attempts to claim British honours were unsuccessful but Welborn is not giving up on his dream of getting his hands on a Lonsdale belt. Black Country boys James Beech Jr and debutant Antony Woolery also feature. Tickets are £35, or £40 on the night, via the boxers on Facebook or at iboxingtickets.com

Marathon gentleman of Verona

THERE was more cross country action for Dudley Kingswinford Running Club as a small group travelled to Bullwell Hall, Nottingham, for the Midlands 7 for the men and 5 for the ladies.

Away from the league action this was more of a cup game for the blue hoops.

In a competition open to entrants from the Midlands region DK were racing against the likes of Notts AC, Hermitage Harriers, Ilkeston RC and Beeston AC along the usual Black Country heavyweights of Tipton Harriers and Wolverhampton & Bilston.

With six to count as a team for the men and four for the ladies it was a disappointing turnout with both genders failing to field a full team. Those that did run were able to take part as individuals.

The ladies were off first over a five-mile, three-lap course around relatively flat and dry parkland. After chasing the leaders Helen Tromans finished 14th in 35.49 and Hannah McGuire came home in 40.45 in 36th place.

The men raced over a seven-mile course over four laps. Dave Norman was first back for the club in 67th place in 45.36, Graham Wildgoose was 119th in 50.42, Andy Weaver 126th in 51.25 and Richard Jones stopped the clock in 52.39 to take 133rd.

Roger Beddard took part in the Verona Marathon after doubting whether he would make it. Emergency treatment on a hamstring injury and a late fitness test got him to the start line, all he had to do was finish. And he did – in 4.36.15.

Lasting memorial to cricketing greats

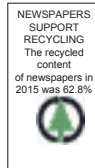
A LASTING memorial commemorating the lives of much-loved cricketing father and son has been unveiled.

The bronze busts of Worcestershire County Cricket Club father and son Basil and Damian D'Oliveira was unveiled by Naomi and Tracey D'Oliveira, widows of the two men, at The D'Oliveira Foundations Annual Gala Dinner.

The solid bronze busts, which have been three years in the design and manufacture, were created by renowned sports sculptor John McKenna at a cost of almost £15,000 most of which was raised from a sponsored walk from Worcester to Cardiff in 2014.

★★★

The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford.
Thursday, November 23, 2017



HISTORY FOR THE HOPPERS

Stourbridge Grasshoppers 44 Aston OE 2s 17
IT was a momentous occasion as Stourbridge RFC's social team the Grasshoppers took advantage of a gap weekend for the seniors and welcomed Aston Old Edwardians 2nds onto the club's new Rugby365 artificial grass pitch.

In front of a larger than normal audience, Grasshoppers made history with a maiden win on the new surface.

The first half was a topsy-turvy affair as both teams got to grips with the new pitch but the Hoppers settled into their stride with tries for centres Ryan Hadley and Richard Barratt.

This burst from the home club galvanised the visitors who had pledged to play a no kicking Barbarians style game and were rewarded with tries for their bustling number 8 and scrum half Stephen Fisher, one of four Hoppers players loaned to the depleted Aston side, who turned up with just 11 players.

Momentum

Hoppers held a narrow half-time margin, but the visitors were unable to maintain their momentum into the second half and the hosts' fresher legs saw Hadley grab two further tries, with another for centre Barratt and further scores for full back Christopher Turnstile and young fly half Harry Bridgland, plus two Hadley conversions.

Aston had the final say when scrum half Fisher plundered his second try with the last play of the game.

There were two Man of the Match awards, first went to centre Richard Barratt for scoring two tries in his first ever game at centre whilst the second award went to the four Stour lads who played for Aston, Stephen Fisher, John Slim, Stefan Oakley and Richard Gambon.



The Grasshoppers side which tasted success on the Rugby365 artificial grass pitch

Bad tackle ends clash on sour note

DK 24 Old Halesonians 31
OLD Halesonians claimed victory in the local North Midlands Cup derby. But the game ended on a sour note with a bad tackle on DK's Luke Trevis.

In the opening quarter Old Hales had scored two tries and were looking comfortable in the lead at 12-0. DK were slowly

edging back into the game, and should have probably closed the gap but for poor handling. On 24 minutes they were on the scoreboard as Trevis set up Nic Adams with a clear run to the corner.

But Hales hit back, with a converted try following a line-out in the Wanderers corner.

Hales were given seven points for a pushover try and in the second half stretched their lead to 31-5.

But the momentum changed, Trevis sprinted clear for a try, converted, and Connah Jones scored under the posts. But with five minutes to go came the bad tackle that ended the game.



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